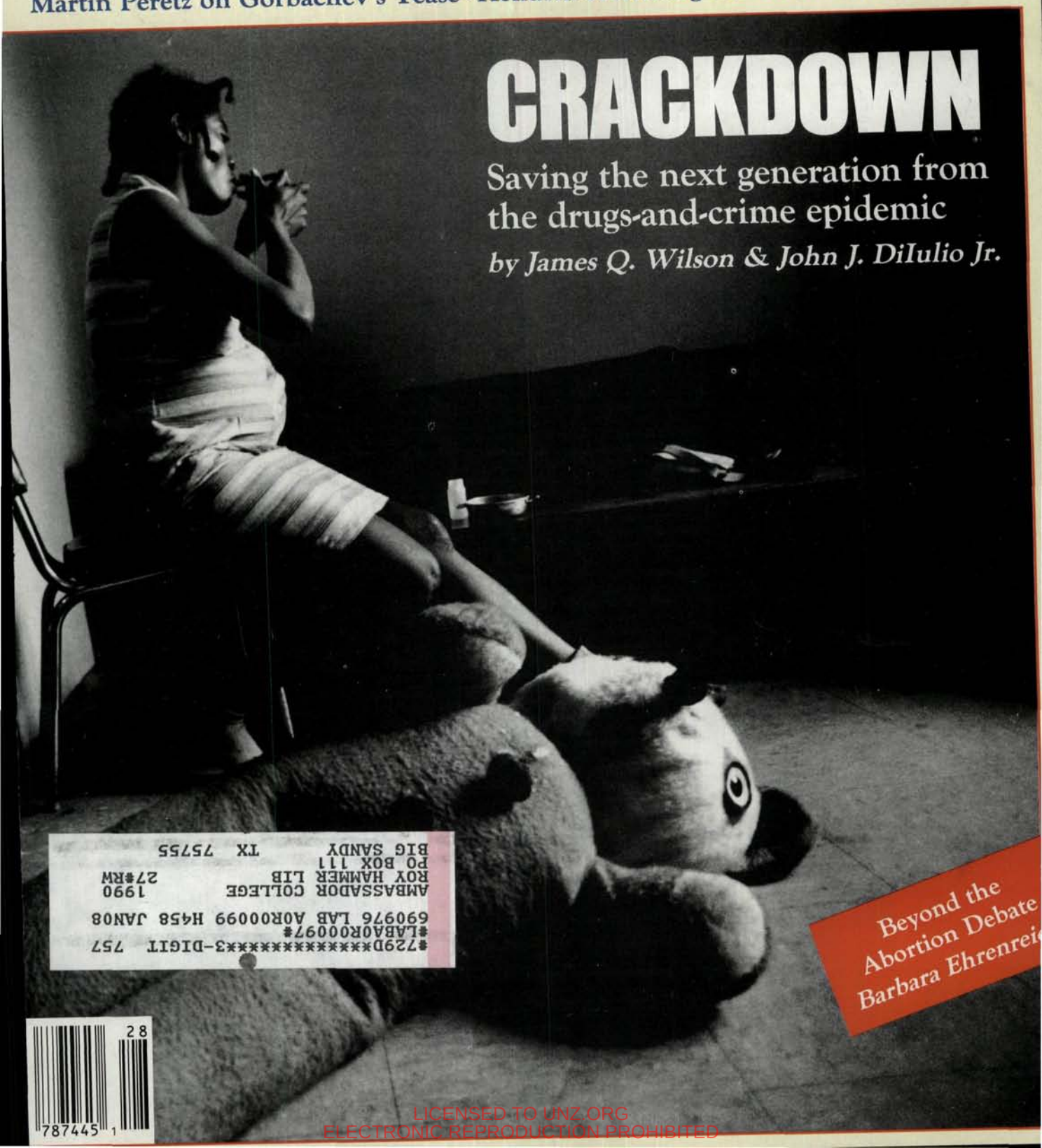
BUSH GOES TEFLON—FRED BARNES

JULY 10, 1989 · $2.50

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Martin Peretz on Gorbachev's Tease · Hendrik Hertzberg on Affirmative Action



CRACKDOWN

Saving the next generation from the drugs-and-crime epidemic

by James Q. Wilson & John J. DiIulio Jr.

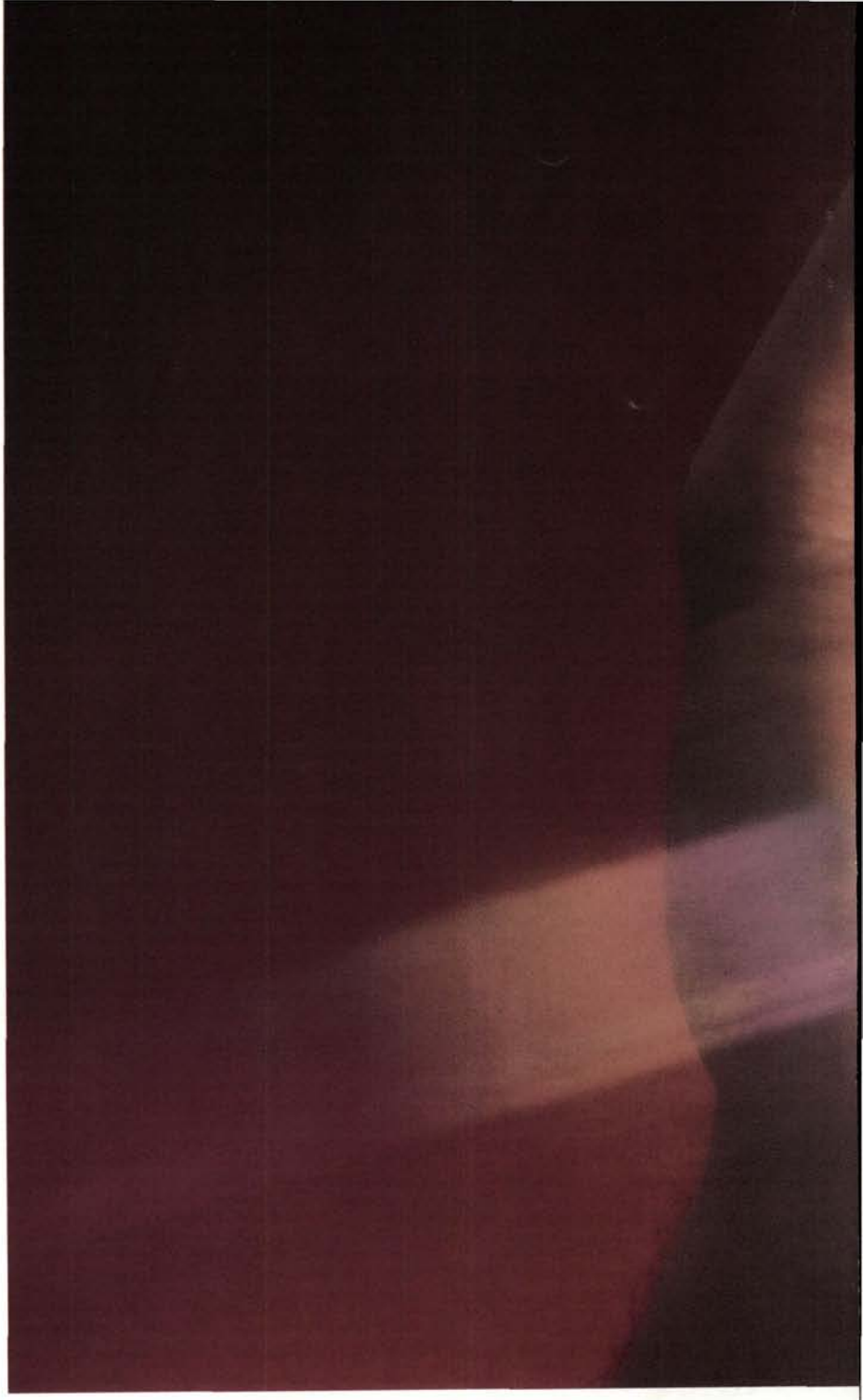
Beyond the Abortion Debate
Barbara Ehrenrei

#729D**********3-DIGIT 757
#LABA0R00097#
690976 LAB A0R00099 H458 JAN08
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE 1990
ROY HAMMER LIB 27#RW
PO BOX 111
BIG SANDY TX 75755

28
787445 1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"My job is to capture the power of light."



"Boeing is making important progress in key areas of light technology: optical sensors, components that receive and transmit data at ultra high speed, and wavelength division multiplexing.

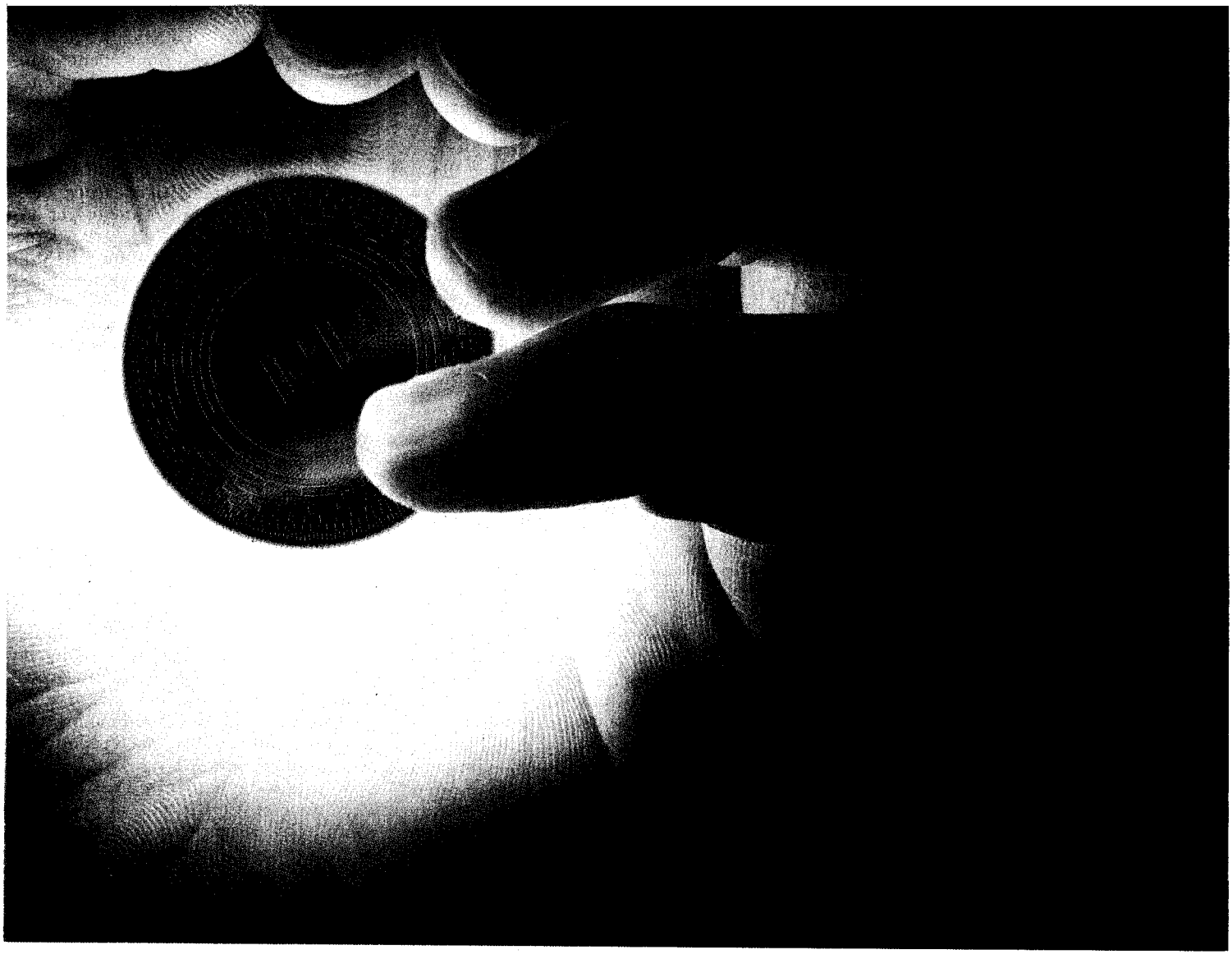
"One immediate goal is highly reliable fly-by-light control sensors for the LHX, the Army's new attack helicopter.

"Photonics, or light technology, offers many advantages over electronics this kind of application. For examp higher band width, immunity to lightning and to electro-magneti interference.

"We already realize photonics can help us design more reliable and responsive airplanes.

"It also may lead to computers that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



ıre 100 times faster and more power-
ul than today's best. And there's even
he possibility that photonics could
mprove everyday products such as
elevision sets, telephones and other
lectronics-based appliances."

— Glen E. Miller
Senior Principal Engineer
Boeing High Technology
Center

At Boeing we're sharing knowledge and integrating technology to create high-quality products and services. In electronics, computer services, aviation and aerospace.

BOEING

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®
FROM WASHINGTON

Wounds of Race

I have yet to meet a well-informed, un-bigoted black American who would not firmly endorse the following statement: If you're black, you have to be twice as good to travel the same socioeconomic distance as a white person in this country—twice as talented, twice as ambitious, twice as determined.

To this, the average well-informed, un-bigoted white American will reply: Nonsense. Sure, that was true years ago, but today if you're black and minimally qualified all you have to do is show up, and bang—you're in college, you're in law school, you've got the job.

The gap between these two honest perceptions is a measure of the passion and pain of race in America. Race is the wound that will not heal, and the Supreme Court has just rubbed fresh salt in that wound with a series of decisions truncating the equal employment provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964—which, as of July 2, will have been the law for exactly 25 years. What a dismal anniversary present.

To read these decisions is to become aware of the dizzying moral fall from the Warren Court, a product of Eisenhower Republicanism, to the Rehnquist Court, a product of Reagan Republicanism. When the Warren Court took up this most divisive of American perplexities, it was careful to seek unanimity among its own members: *Brown* v. *Board of Education* was a 9-0 decision. The Rehnquist Court hacks away at settled precedent by repeated votes of 5 to 4. The Warren Court looked to the grandeur of the Constitution for guidance. The Rehnquist Court draws its arguments from abstruse (and questionable) points of contract law. The Warren Court took history (not just "legislative history") into account, and considered the building of social justice to be part of its writ. The Rehnquist Court renders its decisions in highly technical, almost impenetrable language wholly free of any hint of the suffering, the bitterness, and all the other human realities that inform the cases it decides.

"The linchpin of the 'impermissible collateral attack' doctrine—the attribution of preclusive effect to a failure to intervene—is therefore quite inconsistent with Rule 19 and Rule 24," writes Chief Justice Rehnquist in a typical passage of *Martin* v. *Wilks*—and that's about as exalted as his language gets. In that particular case, the Court, by the usual 5-4 majority, opened the way for endless legal assaults on an affirmative action program, the product of seven years of painful negotiations and lawsuits, that since 1981 has peacefully and effectively brought a measure of racial integration to the previously all-white fire department of Birmingham, Alabama.

After reading the decisions, I ended up sharing the dismay of Justice Blackmun, who wrote in dissent, "One wonders whether the majority still believes that race discrimination—or, more accurately, race discrimination against nonwhites—is a problem in our society, or even remembers that it ever was." But the cases themselves are less important than the larger questions about race (and about affirmative action) they raise.

The affirmative action debate takes place in a context shaped by the success of civil rights and the failure of social policy. The triumphant destruction of institutionalized segregation broke apart the old black communities in which people of all classes and levels of accomplishment lived together in oppression. The most ambitious, lucky, and talented were—and are—boiled off into the larger society. As an unintended consequence, those left behind have been distilled into an increasingly isolated, increasingly pathological, increasingly self-destructive subculture, the urban black underclass. Social programs designed to alleviate its condition have either proved unworkable or been starved. Reaganism's upward redistribution of income has sharpened the pain. But the failure is general. "Conservatives have ignored the problem, left the solution to 'market forces' or, worse, to social Darwinism," writes Joe Klein in a brilliant essay in the May 29 *New York* magazine. "Liberals seem to have abandoned critical thought entirely, allowing militants to dictate their agenda, scorning most efforts to impose sanctions on anti-social behavior by underclass blacks."

Affirmative action is a kind of homeopathic medicine, an effort to correct an immense historic injustice with small doses of "injustice" in the present. It is an effort to lift some blacks by main force into the middle class. It should properly be seen not as a sacrifice by whites for the benefit of blacks, but rather as a sacrifice by the present generation for the benefit of the next. The cost is paid today—by the whites shunted aside, and, more subtly, by the blacks obliged to doubt that their advancement is personally deserved. ("Social victims may be collectively entitled, but they are all too often individually demoralized," writes the black essayist Shelby Steele, quoted by Klein.) The payoff will come tomorrow, when a new generation of black children is born into the middle class—there to share, presumably, the un-self-conscious advantages and complexes of a bourgeois upbringing.

The psychic cost of affirmative action to its purported "real-time" beneficiaries is very high. In the post-slavery century of segregated oppression, few members of what W. E. B. DuBois called "the talented tenth" were troubled by lack of self-esteem. They *knew* that whatever they had they had more than earned, because there was no other way to get it. Their affirmative action counterparts of today cannot be so sure. Yes, the jobs are easier to get—and in this sense the white perception is correct. But the *respect* that is supposed to come with the job—that comes with it more or less automatically for whites—does not come automatically for blacks. It cannot be "demanded," Jesse Jackson notwithstanding. It must be struggled for and earned. This applies to self-respect as well as to the respect of others. "You're not here because you're smart or because you worked hard, you're here because there's a program for hiring black people." That's a natural enough thought for whites to have, and they don't have to be "racist" in any classic way to have it. It's a thought, moreover, that on some level the black beneficiaries of affirmative action are obliged to share. That is a high hurdle to overcome—as high, psychologically, as segregation was. The fact that the hurdle is subjective and invisible, that it cannot be measured by outward signs, does not make it any the less real. That is why, when blacks insist they must be "twice as good," they are merely reporting the existential truth of their own experience.

In any event, affirmative action can work only at the margins. It can pull up only those who are ready to be pulled up. It can do little or nothing for the mind-numbingly dreadful problems of the underclass—the powerful, self-reinforcing nexus of crime, drugs, children bearing children, family atomization, despair, peer pressure to fail in school, and all the fearful rest.

Against those problems—the real problems—affirmative action is helpless; and, in isolation, it fosters a cycle of mutual racial resentment destructive to the political will that is needed. There is no sign of that political will. President Bush and the Republicans have absolutely nothing to say about it.

continued on page 42

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Property of
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Big Sandy, Texas

RECEIVED
JUL 05 1989

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

JULY 10, 1989

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 3,886

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Editor
MICHAEL KINSLEY (on leave)
Acting Editor
ROBERT WRIGHT
Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER
Managing Editor
DOROTHY WICKENDEN
Senior Editors
FRED BARNES, HENDRIK HERTZBERG,
ANN HULBERT, MICKEY KAUS,
MORTON M. KONDRACKE
New Republic Books Editor
(Basic Books)
BILL NEWLIN
Economics
ROBERT KUTTNER
Films
STANLEY KAUFFMANN
Theater
ROBERT BRUSTEIN
Music
EDWARD ROTHSTEIN
Poetry
RICHARD HOWARD
Art
MARK STEVENS
Architecture
HERBERT MUSCHAMP
Contributing Editors
ROBERT COLES, HENRY FAIRLIE,
JAMES K. GLASSMAN,
CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER,
VINT LAWRENCE, LOUIS MENAND,
ROBERT B. REICH, JONATHAN RIEDER,
MAGGIE SCARF, RONALD STEEL,
RICHARD L. STROUT, E. V. THAW, ANNE TYLER,
NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN,
MICHAEL WALZER, C. VANN WOODWARD
Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY
Assistant to the Editors
JUNE HALEY
Assistant Editor
LEONA HIRAOKA ROTH
Production Manager
BRUCE STEINKE
Assistant Production Manager
KRISTIN CONRADI
Production Associate
ERIC V. PETERSON
Literary Assistant
SARA MOSLE
Reporter-Researchers
ELAINE BUCKBERG, DAVID ELLEN,
JOHN HOOD, DAVID KURAPKA,
HOWARD ULLMAN

President
JEFFREY L. DEARTH
Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON
Associate Publisher
TOM HICKS
Controller
JEAN GANDY
Advertising Manager
JENNIFER BARRETT
Circulation Director
PATTY JONES
Accounting Manager
CHRISTINA R. OVERHOLSER
Advertising Assistant
DARLENE BUSCAGLIO
Accounting Assistant
JULIE HAWKINS
Back Issues and Reception
MAXINE OAKLEY
Circulation Consultant
H. EDWARD YOUNG
Corporate Marketing
GUY STODDARD
Leadership Network Advertising
ROBERT F. SENNOTT JR.

COVER photo © Eugene Richards/Magnum Photos, Inc.
Article on page 21.

4 TRB FROM WASHINGTON **WOUNDS OF RACE** Affirmative action in the Rehnquist era.

6 CORRESPONDENCE Ed Koch on Ed Koch, '60s debate revisited, &c.

7 THE EDITORS **LAURO'S THEMES** Bush's campaign pledge to become the education president is turning out to be a bad joke—but an entertaining one, thanks to bumbling education czar Lauro Cavazos. **IZZY STONE, R.I.P.** The passing of a legend.

10 NOTEBOOK The Qaddafi award, the HUD scandal, &c.

11 FRED BARNES **WHITE HOUSE WATCH: TEFLON II** Wondering how Bush got so popular? It's a miracle of modern science.

13 NATHAN GLAZER **POSTCARD TOKYO: THE ENIGMA** How many Japanese does it take to screw in a light bulb? More than you'd think.

14 MARTIN PERETZ **THE GORBACHEV TEASE** Beware of Communists claiming to be different from all the others.

18 ZACHARY CITRON **ON THE HILL: AUTOPILOT DEMOCRACY** How to save America from Congress.

20 MARK LILLA **THE GLOBAL ZEITGEIST CHECKLIST: ITALY**

21 JAMES Q. WILSON AND JOHN J. DIIULIO JR. **CRACKDOWN** Before we can get at the root causes of the drugs-and-crime epidemic, we have to take back the streets.

26 STANLEY KAUFFMANN **ON FILMS: ANYTHING GOES?** *Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills* is not just in bad taste, it's boring.

28 ROBERT BRUSTEIN **ON THEATER: FAIRY TAILSPIN** *Cymbeline* veers out of control at the Public Theater.

30 BARBARA EHRENREICH **MOTHERS UNITE** *Contested Lives: The Abortion Debate in an American Community* by Faye D. Ginsburg

31 FRED DINGS **POEM** *Redwing Blackbirds*

33 DAVID BROMWICH **THE ART OF CONVERSATION** *The Voice of Liberal Learning: Michael Oakeshott on Education* by Michael Oakeshott, edited by Timothy Fuller

36 DAVID G. ROSKIES **YIDDISH LESSONS** *From That Time and Place: A Memoir 1938-1947* by Lucy S. Dawidowicz

39 GEOFFREY WHEATCROFT **A TALE OF TWO NATIONS** *Modern Ireland 1600-1972* by R. F. Foster

43 WASHINGTON DIARIST **BE HAPPY**

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 201, Number 2, Issue 3,886, July 10, 1989. (Printed in the U.S. on June 21, 1989.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 9 & 16, July 17 & 24, Aug. 7 & 14, and Sept. 18 & 25, 1989) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $59.97; foreign, $89.97; Canada, $74.97. Back issues, $3.00 (includes postage & handling). ©1989 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322. For subscription problems call 800-274-6686.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Decent Politics

To the editors:

Peter Collier and David Horowitz write ("Panthers, *Contras*, and Other Wars," June 26) that "TNR senior editor Hendrik Hertzberg complained to us in a recent conversation, 'You were apologists for communism then and you are apologists for anti-communism now.' (As if these postures were morally equivalent.)"

The purported quotation is a fabrication. I never made this statement.

The accusation that I see communism and anti-communism as morally equivalent is a smear. As anyone who is familiar with my thinking and writing can attest, I have been an anti-communist all my life. I have always rejected any suggestion that communism and anti-communism are morally equivalent. I have always written and believed that anti-communism, like anti-fascism, is a necessary though not sufficient condition for decent politics.

I have never met Peter Collier. During my only conversation with David Horowitz, I expressed views that were the opposite of the "moral equivalence" nonsense he accuses me of. I must therefore assume that his lie about me was both conscious and malicious.

HENDRIK HERTZBERG
Washington, D.C.

Koch In The Act

To the editors:

Let me put Joseph B. Rose's libelous comments in context ("Mayor Culpa," May 8). He is angry because I stayed neutral when he ran for state senator in the Democratic primary last year. I remained friendly with his opponent, the incumbent Manfred Ohrenstein. It is true that Ohrenstein was and is under indictment for allegedly using his state-funded staff for private political campaigns. His guilt or innocence will be established when his case is brought before a judge and jury. The high regard in which he is held by his colleagues in the Senate resulted in his being re-elected as minority leader. I voted for Ohrenstein, and I hope that he is exonerated.

What makes Rose even angrier is that even though he spent $650,000 in the primary race—and some estimate at least $200,000 was his own money—he lost. Even though he tried to take advantage of Ohrenstein's indictment, he lost.

Now, let me reply to some of the false comments in Rose's article. He says, "Koch had regularly referred to [Meade] Esposito as a 'gangster.' " As far as I can recall, I have never referred to Esposito in that way. He has now been convicted of corrupting Representative Mario Biaggi, but he has never, to the best of my knowledge, been tied to mobsters or violence that would justify describing him as a "gangster." My meeting with Esposito in 1977 took place in the presence of the Presiding Justice of the Appellate Division, Second Department, Milton Mollen. Indeed, because of that and the respect in which Judge Mollen is held by many people, my critics no longer mention that meeting—nor should they.

Rose says, "The most flagrant Koch payoff was his naming of Esposito's protégé Anthony Ameruso as transportation commissioner. Overriding his own panel's list (of candidates . . .)." But I made it clear that I would not necessarily select the candidate any agency's panel recommended. I overrode the panel of the Department of Transportation and chose Ameruso as commissioner. Why? It didn't hurt that he was supported by County Leader Esposito, and that he was Italian and from Brooklyn. It certainly helped that he had been designated by John Zuccotti—the highly respected first deputy mayor of the Beame administration—as one of the two best commissioners in the administration. Ameruso later violated the law, but when I appointed him, his credentials for the job were valid.

Rose then states, "Koch's diminutive sidekick John LoCicero and Esposito lieutenant Anthony Genovesi then conspired to place as many hacks as possible on the city's many obscure but profitable authorities and commissions." I defy him to name these imaginary appointees. His statement is nothing but a smear.

Rose attacks me for having racially polarized the city. In 1985 I got 38 percent of the black vote in the primary while the black candidate, Denny Farrell, got 40 percent. And in the general election I carried every black district. Is this polarization?

Rose says I left the Coliseum project "to be solved in a long and costly lawsuit that the city eventually lost." The fact is that we brought the developer and the opponents of the project, including Rose, to the table, and the Coliseum is now going forward, although somewhat modified. We have successfully closed this matter with a vote at the Board of Estimate and are selling the site to the original developer for $337 million. The entire city will benefit.

EDWARD I. KOCH
New York, New York

Joseph B. Rose replies:

It is not surprising that Ed Koch, facing grim prospects for re-election, is upset

continued on page 42

First Anniversary.
Second Anniversary.
Third Anniversary.
Fourth Anniversary.
Certainly she likes your annual gift of a nightgown.
But she'd have to be Rip Van Winkle to use all of them.
This year, tell her you'd marry her all over again.
The Diamond Anniversary Band.
A diamond is forever.
Suggested retail price for rings $2,500-$6,000.
For more information, call 800 777-8220.
BEST®, BEST PRODUCTS® and BEST Jewelry® are registered service marks of Best Products Co., Inc., a VA Corp.
BEST·BEST Jewelry®

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC
JULY 10, 1989

LAURO'S THEMES

During the 1988 presidential campaign, George Bush promised that if elected he would reverse Ronald Reagan's course in two areas. He would become known as an environmentalist president and as an education president. Six months into his administration, Bush is one for two. He has just announced a set of environmental initiatives—on acid rain, toxic chemicals, and urban smog—that will involve a national commitment of $14 billion to $19 billion over ten years. With this he steals the march on the Democratic Party, which is still bogged down in warfare between environmentalists (Senator George Mitchell, Representative Henry Waxman) and industry defenders (coal's Senator Robert Byrd, auto's Representative John Dingell). On education, though, Bush has confined his activity to visiting schools and uttering urgent rhetoric. "Our schools are in trouble—real trouble," he says. "And that means our kids are in real trouble." And what are we going to do about it? "Well, together we can lead a national crusade for excellence in education."

roviding, that is, that the crusade doesn't cost any ney. Bush's fiscal 1990 budget for education was .4 billion, the same as Reagan spent in fiscal 1989, n though costs in education are rising at a faster than the six percent for consumer prices. Bush's) million in new initiatives—for merit school rds, merit teacher awards (5,000 over five years), magnet schools—will have to come out of the hide sting programs, notably programs for the disad- ged. And already only 18 percent of eligible pre- l children can participate in the demonstrably ive Head Start program, thanks to federal ness.

ing Reagan, Bush insists that more money isn't swer. "The fact is that we spend more per capita than many of our toughest competitors. And as a nation, we devote more than $300 billion a year to educating our children, and that's not stingy. It's staggering. The resources are there. It's how we put those resources to work that counts." There's some truth in this; federal outlays could be better targeted. But there's some dishonesty in it, too. It simply is not true that the United States spends vastly more on education than comparable nations. We spend 5.5 percent of GNP. Sweden spends 7.5 percent; Canada, France, and Norway, seven percent. Japan nominally spends five percent, but its society is organized differently from ours: mothers seldom have jobs outside the home and often tutor their children. Most children attend *juku*, private tutoring schools, which their parents pay for. Most high schools charge tuition.

Another key index of Bush's lack of commitment to education is his retention of Lauro Cavazos as education secretary. The former president of Texas Tech appears to have been chosen to please Hispanic voters rather than to advance his cause forcefully and articulately. Indeed, Cavazos himself demonstrates why American education needs to return to the basics: to regain simple clarity of thought and expression. A recent "major address" of his, proudly circulated by Education Department flacks, is full of cloudy thinking and doubletalk. In it he says, for example, that he can "quantitate the education deficit," and then makes five points, including, consecutively, these two: "28 percent of our students drop out of high school"; "the national high school graduation rate is only 71.5 percent." Hmmm. Cavazos's prescriptions sound like this: "I believe we . . . must restructure elementary and secondary education in this nation. By restructuring, I mean developing and implementing

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

strategies that will improve the educational process at the elementary and secondary school level." Good idea. And, to put a finer point on it: Cavazos favors "curriculum reform that results in better education." It's no surprise that, whereas EPA Director William Reilly trounced Budget Director Richard Darman in a battle over how much to spend on the environment, Cavazos couldn't get even a penny of new funding out of Darman.

Cavazos is pushing only one new initiative—parental "choice." The idea sounds fine in theory: parents are free to pick the school that best suits their children's needs, thus stirring competitive energy and innovation among principals and teachers. Failing schools—those no one wants to attend—would get new management. This proposal has the quality that many Republicans value above all in educational reforms: it involves no federal dollars. And it undoubtedly can help spur some schools on to excellence. But it also has nasty side effects. What about the schools that *aren't* spurred on to excellence? And what about the students who are stuck in them during the years when the schools are going from slightly sub-par to certifiably deficient and are in need of new management? These will tend to be children with uninvolved, apathetic parents—children who have the deck stacked against them in the first place. In some areas, they will be children of the underclass. Until conservatives can figure out how to protect these children, and ensure that "choice" doesn't lead to further de facto segregation along various socioeconomic lines, this idea doesn't deserve the status of a serious nationwide proposal. Continued regional experimentation with it—as is already happening—will be sufficient.

Cavazos and Bush might prefer not to admit it, but dollars have made a difference in education, especially when coupled with reform. The greatest improvements in SAT scores between 1982 and 1988 have occurred in states—South Carolina, Hawaii, Georgia, Rhode Island, and New Jersey—that dramatically increased teacher salaries and instituted other reforms: competency testing for teachers; alternative certification that permits capable candidates to teach even if they didn't major in education; and merit pay for teachers based on student performance. These are the things Cavazos ought to be pushing, and he should be flailing states that ignore them. He should also be coming up with some federal money to help schools in the poorest states and localities emulate these successful models. The inequality of opportunity fostered by our patchwork system of educational financing is the longest-running travesty in American history.

Surely this long-standing abdication of responsibility by the federal government is largely the cause of the dismal statistics that fill the newspapers. The National Assessment of Educational Performance, which conducts random tests of about 100,000 children, found that only 12 percent of 17-year-olds could arrange a series of fractions in order of size, and only five percent could accurately read a bus schedule. In practically every international comparison, American children perform at or near the bottom of the industrialized world in math, science, and writing.

America will never have a national school curriculum. But we ought to have a set of national performance tests for pupils and teachers, so that the public can judge which states, localities, and individual schools are doing well and which are doing badly. As matters stand, the United States has nowhere near the kind of accurate statistics on education that it has for money supply, employment, or trade. Research is one area in which Bush did ask for more money, and Congress should give him even more than he asked for.

In fact, Congress should do that in many areas. Indications are that it will appropriate about $1.7 billion more for education than Bush recommended. Even given present budgetary straits, that number could be justifiably tripled, so long as Congress ensures that the money is used wisely, and specifies the revenues, or makes the budget cuts, that will cover it. Of course, the number may be sharply lowered through negotiations, but this spectacle will be worth watching. Let the people see the education president in action, shortchanging the public schools.

IZZY STONE, R.I.P.

I. F. Stone, who died last week at 81, was a legend in his time. Like other legends, his was composed of the factual and the false. Still, there is much in his life and character on which both his admirers and detractors can agree. He never finished college but he turned himself into quite a learned man. He was among the last of the great autodidacts. One might even term him a gentleman-scholar, although he was a bit too scrappy, too *heimish* for that. Izzy Stone was a friend of many of the editors of this journal, maintaining these relationships across intellectual and political divides, always without rancor—usually, in fact, with a warm and animated twinkle in eyes that were magnified by the thickest damn spectacles in creation. He once said that his good humor about political antagonists might be traced to his hearing difficulties.

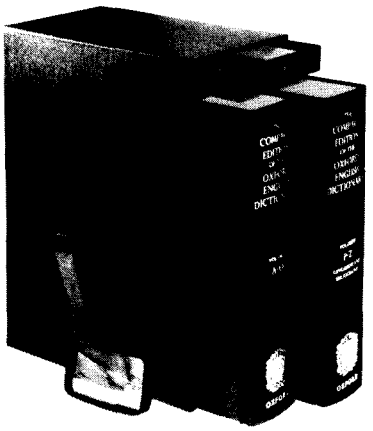
The adjectives that tripped off the PC keys of I
obituarists were "iconoclastic," "independent," "
erick." It is certainly true that, for the first 40 or so y
in a more than 60-year career of relentlessly foragi
and behind U.S. government documents, congressi
hearing transcripts, and obscure official reports, S
was out of the mainstream of our national life, at
with both public policy and the public philosoph
used to say that he had started as a pariah, h
long enough to become a character, and might ye
on long enough to achieve the status of an insti
The prophesy came true, and he became the es
ment's favorite oppositionist, accumulating its
ums the way capitalists are wont to accumulate

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Choose one of these fine works and save over $290.

You simply agree to buy 4 books within the next 2 years.

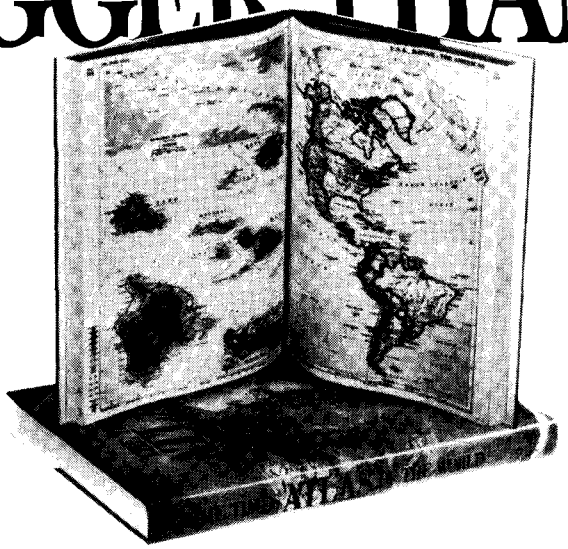
BARGAINS DON'T GET ANY BIGGER THAN THIS.



The Compact Edition of The Oxford English Dictionary

for **$27.95** (Pub. price $195)

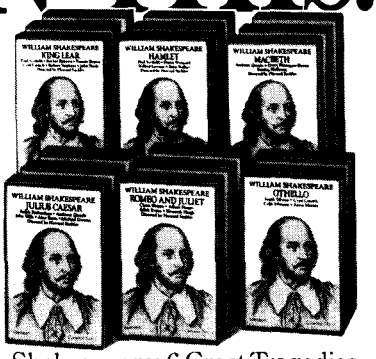
"The most complete, most scholarly dictionary of the English language"—*The Christian Science Monitor.* Through photoreduction, the original 13-volume set has been reproduced in this two-volume *Compact Edition.* A Bausch & Lomb magnifying glass is included.



The Times Atlas of the World Seventh Comprehensive Edition

for **$29.95** (Pub. price $149.95)

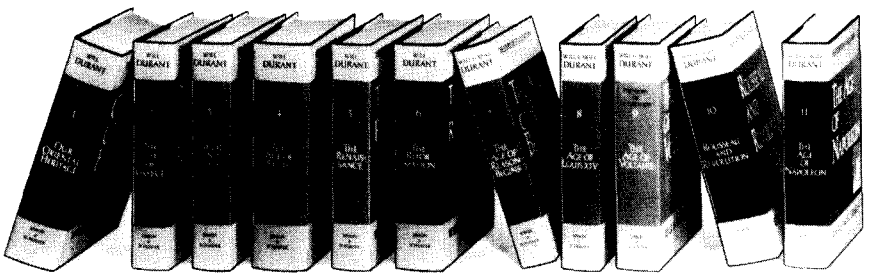
"The best atlas now available in English."—*The New York Times.* The only atlas printed in 8 colors for clear reading of geographic and political features. This volume contains 292 pages of color maps and a 277-page index with over 200,000 entries which include longitude and latitude—a feature not offered in other atlases. Size: 18" x 12." Pages: 520.



Shakespeare: 6 Great Tragedies

for **$19.95** (List prices total $179.60)

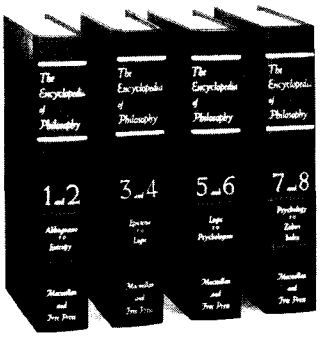
Book-of-the-Month is proud to present 6 of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies: *Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth, Othello, Romeo and Juliet* and *Julius Caesar.* Paul Scofield, Ralph Richardson, Albert Finney, Dame Edith Evans, Claire Bloom, John Mills and many more of England's most gifted Shakespearean actors perform memorably in complete readings of each play. 17 cassettes in all.



The Story of Civilization by Will and Ariel Durant

for **$29.95** (Pub. prices total $335.45)

For almost half a century Will and Ariel Durant traced the continuity of world history—the religions and philosophies, the political and economic tides, the arts and sciences, the customs and conquests—to show the foundations of society today. A Book-of-the-Month Club exclusive for almost 50 years, the Durants' illustrated masterwork is history come alive.



The Encyclopedia of Philosophy

for **$24.95** (Pub. price $225)

Regarded as the most comprehensive encyclopedia of philosophy ever published, this superb set—compiled in collaboration with the world's foremost philosophers—encompasses aspects of ancient, medieval, modern, Eastern and Western thought. The four volumes represent an essential aid for students and a rewarding reference source.

© 1989 BOMC

Facts About Membership. As a member you will receive the *Book-of-the-Month Club News*® 15 times a year (about every 3½ weeks). Every issue reviews a Selection and more than 150 other books, which are carefully chosen by our editors. If you want the Selection, do nothing. It will be shipped to you automatically. If you want one or more other books—or no book at all—indicate your decision on the Reply Form and return it by the specified date. *Return Privilege:* If the *News* is delayed and you receive the Selection without having had 10 days to notify us, you may return it for credit. *Cancellations:* Membership may be discontinued, either by you or by the Club, at any time after you have bought 4 additional books. Join today. With savings and choices like these, Book-of-the-Month Club is where book lovers belong.

BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH CLUB®

Book-of-the-Month Club, Inc., P.O. Box 8803, Camp Hill, PA 17011-8803 **A127-7-1**

Check one box only.

- ☐ 923. Shakespeare (17 cassettes) **$19.95**
- ☐ 905. Compact OED **$27.95**
- ☐ 946. Times Atlas of the World **$29.95**
- ☐ 913. The Story of Civ. **$29.95**
- ☐ 917. Ency. of Philosophy **$24.95**

Please enroll me as a member of Book-of-the-Month Club and send me the item I have checked at left, billing me for the appropriate amount, plus shipping and handling charges. I agree to buy four more books during the next two years. A shipping and handling charge is added to each shipment.

Name _____ 9-64

(Please print plainly)

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Prices shown are U.S. prices. Outside the U.S. prices are generally higher. All orders subject to approval.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At no point did Stone run away from what others might see as lost causes. He made his stand against McCarthyism, its predecessors and practioners. He was early in the struggle for civil rights. He was early against the Vietnam War, ferreting out official mendacity. These positions were the source of his moral authority.

But the clarity of these positions obscured the context within which they emerged. The truth is that he had a rather uncomplicated attitude toward America. He thought it in the wrong, very much on the wrong side of history. There was hardly a problem in the world for which the United States government was not to blame. What he loved about this country, and in a rather abstract way, was the Bill of Rights and its unfulfilled ideals.

For most of his career Stone brought little of his detachment and skepticism, his insistence on norms, to bear on revolutionary regimes. For many years the Soviet Union was a special beneficiary of his ardors. Later he would transfer them to Communist China, Castroite Cuba, and North Vietnam. The responsibility for unpleasant truths about such places he usually pinned on Washington. It's doubtful that many of last week's tribute-writers had ever laid eyes on his *The Hidden History of the Korean War*, a phantasmagoric account of conspiracy and deceit so implausible that it has barely penetrated the annals of the radical revision of American history now in progress in the academy. There was a paradigm in Stone's head: the virtuous new order was always under siege from the venal old.

By and by Izzy did distance himself from the U.S.S.R.—though not, it must be said, until after Nikita Khrushchev's 1956 speech denouncing the crimes of Stalinism. That year he visited the Soviet Union and wrote mournfully, "This is not a good society and it is not led by honest men." (As if dishonesty were the worst of their crimes.) What, then, were Stalin's heirs if they were not honest? They were, Stone wrote queasily, "the same frustrating wooden Indians" who people the State Department. (He was zestier ridiculing anti-Communist politics: "I condemn the way Stalin combs his hair and I disapprove the way Molotov blows his nose.") In more recent years, at just about the time Lillian Hellman did, Izzy spoke up for Soviet dissidents; and his last published piece, for the *New York Review of Books*, criticized Mikhail Gorbachev for hypocrisy on human rights. But if he knew he had been tragically wrong for more than two generations about the great enchantment of the 20th century, he never quite faced himself or his readers candidly. He just went on, unfazed and apparently untroubled.

I. F. Stone was always a man of great passions and enthusiasms. These were the fuel of his work. His two zealously Zionist books, for example, were immensely stirring. But don't look to them as history or as objective reporting. They are the writings of a man with a point of view. This is a legitimate undertaking, certainly. It is what we want from pamphleteers but not what we ought to want from reporters, and Izzy Stone thought of himself as a reporter. He had great reverence for facts, and he uncovered many that others were too lazy or too timid to find. But for the bulk of his life he selected the facts he reported in accordance with an ideology that had no such reverence, and to ignore that truth about him does his memory less honor than to remember it.

In death Izzy Stone is being justly celebrated for his virtues. He was a clear, forceful writer, an indefatigable researcher, and a creative publisher (with his four-page newsletter, *I.F. Stone's Weekly*, he invented desktop publishing well before the age of the computer). In old age he may finally have come to understand that all his best work—all the digging, the ferreting, the polemicizing, the triumphant use of official documents to refute official pretenses—had been made possible by the distinctive openness of the society in which he lived. And Izzy was a terribly nice man.

NOTEBOOK

MINORITY REPORT: As the Department of Housing and Urban Development scandal unfolds, two things are becoming clear: (1) Samuel R. Pierce Jr., the HUD secretary who presided over it, wasn't the most able and alert of administrators; (2) his boss, Ronald Reagan, didn't want him to be. From the beginning, Reagan saw HUD mainly as a dumping ground for patronage jobs; Pierce wasn't even allowed to choose his own deputy. For anyone who doubts Reagan's indifference to Pierce's mission, there's that famous incident in 1981 when the president encountered his new HUD secretary only a few months after appointing him and greeted him as "Mr. Mayor." The hiring of Pierce, who is black, was one of the first examples of a stratagem pioneered by Reagan and now being used by George Bush. It goes like this. First, appoint a minority to a high post, thus shoring up your credentials among minorities and liberals. But don't waste a lot of time finding someone ideally qualified for the job. (Any old friend of the First Lady's will do.) Then, having settled on someone mediocre, you can put him in charge of an area you want to neglect anyway—education, civil rights, housing for the poor, welfare. In one easy step you've managed to look more kind and gentle and become less so. So far, Bush's standout decoy minorities include his nominee for assistant attorney general for civil rights (William Lucas, who is black, and whose credentials include a flunked bar exam, a falsified résumé, and very little relevant experience) and Hispanic Education Secretary Lauro Cavazos (see "Lauro's Themes," page 7, for details).

KIDS THESE DAYS: Nelson Mandela's family hasn't done a very diligent job of guarding the sanctity of his name while he's been in prison. First his wife, Winnie, started something called the Mandela Football Club, which turned out to be a group of bodyguards prone to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

beating up teenagers, and even killing them. Now Mandela's daughter, Zenani, has gone to Libya to accept on his behalf the first annual "Qaddafi International Human Rights Prize," named after you-know-who and bestowed by vote of an "international people's committee." Next on the summer awards circuit: the Li Peng trophy for accuracy in media.

ANY MORE QUESTIONS?

Strong Dollar Gives Lift to Stocks, but for How Long?

—*Wall Street Journal*, June 12

Dow falls 15 points on strength of dollar

—*Boston Globe*, June 14
(thanks to Richard M. Fletcher, Boston, Massachusetts)

SOUNDS FISHY:

U.S. Says Toxic Chemicals Are Imperiling Aquatic Life

—*New York Times*, June 14

Deep Ocean: The Safest Dump

—same paper, same day
(thanks to Gary L. Adler, Lynbrook, New York)

SAY WATT?

Watt candidly admits 'influence-peddling'

—*Denver Post*, June 10

Watt denies influence peddling

—*Rocky Mountain News*, same day
(thanks to Jaima Mellor, Evergreen, Colorado)

HOWARD'S END: Not even the prospect of imminent death from pancreatic cancer could put a damper on Howard Simons. While friends were commiserating over his illness, he briskly carried on his duties as curator of the Nieman Foundation, deflecting condolences with wisecracks. During the program's 50th anniversary celebration, when an ambulance pulled up to tend to an elderly lady who had collapsed in a faint, he looked around and loudly announced, "It's not me." Howard was widely admired for the relentlessness with which, as managing editor, he directed the *Washington Post*'s Watergate investigation, for his sometimes impossibly purist championing of freedom of the press, and for the loyalty, affection, and goading he supplied to the young journalists he took under his wing in Washington and Cambridge. And he didn't limit his harangues to his American charges and colleagues. The black South African editor Zwelakhe Sisulu said that Howard's unflagging efforts to publicize his plight were a major reason for his release from prison last year. Under Howard's leadership, the Nieman program became a haven for dissident journalists from all over the world. They'll miss him most of all, as they pursue his vocation of honest, unflinching journalism.

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

TEFLON II

By Fred Barnes

George Bush is lucky. Of all newly elected presidents in American history, he entered the White House with the fewest members of his party in Congress. A doormat presidency was predicted. But it hasn't happened. Instead congressional Democrats self-destructed over ethics and the pay raise. Five-plus months into Bush's presidency, Democrats not only don't dominate the president, they're rarely able to challenge him vigorously. Bush is also blessed with good times here and abroad. "With full employment and communism on the run, it would take a little wizardry to be unpopular," says Mitch Daniels, political director in Ronald Reagan's White House. Bush's public approval rating in mid-June was 70 percent in the Gallup Poll, higher than Reagan ever got.

It's not all luck. I'd never have guessed it, but Bush is as gifted at the politics of governing as he is at the politics of campaigning. From the start, he and his aides saw a way his honeymoon could be extended into the fall of 1989 and beyond. They sketched out a rough scenario, based more on hope than expectation. Things would have to fall in place neatly. They usually don't in politics, but this time they did. In his first 100 days, Bush would try to make the country comfortable with his style and personality. And he would deal with four or five nagging problems—the savings and loan crisis, Third World debt, the budget, etc.—and propel them toward solution. Then in late spring and early summer, "Everybody knew you were going to have a foreign policy round," says Robert Teeter, Bush's pollster and strategist. Bush would have to decide on citing Japan as an unfair trading partner. He'd go to Europe twice. "My hope was the honeymoon would not run out before we got to that period."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It didn't, but it came close. By May criticism of Bush as a do-nothing (and boring) president was mounting. His inaction, especially in foreign affairs, made him the butt of jokes. "You know the IRS says you can write off a room in your home if you use it as a workplace," said Jay Leno. "Looks like there won't be any deductions at the White House this year." Johnny Carson noted the similarities between Bush and George Washington. "The first one is obvious: they both were named George," he said. "They were both Episcopalians. And neither one of them has done a damn thing in the last 100 days."

Just in time, Bush got a "second wind," as Teeter calls it, from his appearance at the NATO summit in Brussels in late May. Bush benefited enormously from low expectations. The conventional wisdom in the press is always a straight-line projection of the present, and he didn't seem up to much in his first 100 days. So when Bush popped his proposal for cutting conventional forces in Europe—a flawed proposal—reporters reacted like a starving man who'd been handed a morsel of food. They consumed it ravenously and declared it a delicacy. The same happened in the case of the agreement with West Germany on short-range nuclear missiles. The press ignored the downside of the compromise, namely that Bush copped out on missile modernization. "The European trip was the symbolic public point that changed the assessment of Bush," says Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater. The honeymoon was prolonged.

John Sununu, the White House chief of staff, says Bush has an extraordinary "sense of the clock." Three days after his inauguration, Bush told a group of advisers that "the first foreign policy forum where we've got to show where we know what we're doing is the NATO summit." Secretary of State James Baker, among others, agreed. The trouble was, the administration relied on its review of Reagan policies to produce a dazzling proposal for Bush to announce. "The review produced a lot of conversation about conventional forces, but no proposal," says a senior White House official. Bush stood by stoically for months as Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev tossed off plans for cutting arms and troops. Gorbo got p.r. points in Europe and with the press, Bush got zinged for inaction. The president "had to bite his tongue," says Sununu. Finally a proposal was generated in the ten days before Bush left for Europe.

Bush's political antennae turn out to be more sensitive than he's been given credit for. And not only in knowing when to spring a proposal on cutting troops in Europe. In the fight over his nomination of John Tower for secretary of defense, Bush never muscled Democrats. He summoned them to the White House, asked for their support, but exerted no pressure. Nor did he question their motives in public. When Tower was defeated, Bush turned the other cheek. Who would have thought this would minimize the damage from the defeat? Well, it did. In hindsight, Bush wasn't hurt by the Tower defeat at all. He wound up with a better defense secretary, Dick Cheney, and no scars—another Teflon president.

From a political standpoint, Bush's domestic agenda is inspired. (It may work as substantive policy, too, but that's another story.) He's neutralized the three issues that bedeviled Reagan and that Democrats were preparing to use against Bush: trade, the environment, and civil rights. Bush's staff was strongly opposed to naming Japan under Section 301 of last year's trade bill as an unfair trader. Sununu, budget director Richard Darman, economics adviser Michael Boskin—all urged that Japan be let off the hook. Bush, who considers himself a free trader, may have agreed in principle. But Special Trade Representative Carla Hills, Commerce Secretary Robert Mosbacher, and Agriculture Secretary Clayton Yeutter argued that Congress would explode and enact tougher protectionist legislation. They were right. Congress, after all, passed 301 for one reason—to bash Japan. Bush complied. By doing so, he averted a fire storm and denied Democrats an issue.

On the environment, Bush leapfrogged Democrats, who've been divided for a decade on revising the Clean Air Act. In 1985 William Ruckelshaus, then head of the Environmental Protection Agency, sought Reagan's support for toughening the act. David Stockman opposed him. "Your acid rain proposal will cost $6,000 per pound of fish saved," said Stockman. Reagan was swayed. Bush heard virtually the same argument, this time from Darman and Boskin, and wasn't swayed. The differences are that Bush thinks of himself as an environmentalist, which Reagan certainly didn't, and that the issue has ripened. "If you identify with an issue and talk about it, there's a point where your credibility gets tested," says Teeter. Bush passed the test. The proof, says Teeter, is that industry is screaming louder than environmentalists about the Bush clean air plan. Bush did more than neutralize the environmental issue. He stole it.

On civil rights, Bush isn't a profile in courage, but at least he's not Reagan. "As long as I've known him," says Teeter, "he's thought the Republican Party was taking a bad rap on civil rights and there was no reason for it." Under Reagan, there was a reason. He actively antagonized the civil rights community. Bush is courting the civil rights community. On June 19, for example, he summoned Vernon Jordan, the former head of the National Urban League, for a private lunch, one-on-one. Bush goes out of his way to avoid trouble. At his press conference on June 8, he said he couldn't talk about a Supreme Court decision that cut back on affirmative action. He hadn't read it. Two weeks later, Fitzwater said Bush still wasn't prepared to answer.

It's premature to call Bush a successful president. Nixon and Carter were riding high at this stage. William Schneider of the American Enterprise Institute describes Bush as an "in-basket president." He deals with what's handed him and "so far it's been successful. This style of governing will work as long as he gets cooperation from allies and from Congress. But his popularity

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is utterly dependent on the status quo and his ability to manage it. He's popular now because the status quo is good." If, say, the economy sours, his political mastery will vanish.

Bush has yet to be tested by real adversity, like a recession or an international crisis in which the United States is directly involved. Being faulted for losing a p.r. war with Gorbo doesn't qualify as adversity. But in Bush's defense, I think he's already changed the notion of what kind of person can be a successful president. After Reagan, everyone assumed you needed a strong presence on TV, a dash of ideology, and a flair for political rhetoric. Bush lacks all three. He may have dazzled the European press with his unpretentious style. At a Brussels press conference, he referred to the contents of a NATO communiqué as "blah, blah." But American reporters, though impressed with Bush's performance in Europe, remain ambivalent. Bush didn't stir enough interest in his speech outside Philadelphia on June 19 to warrant a press bus from Washington.

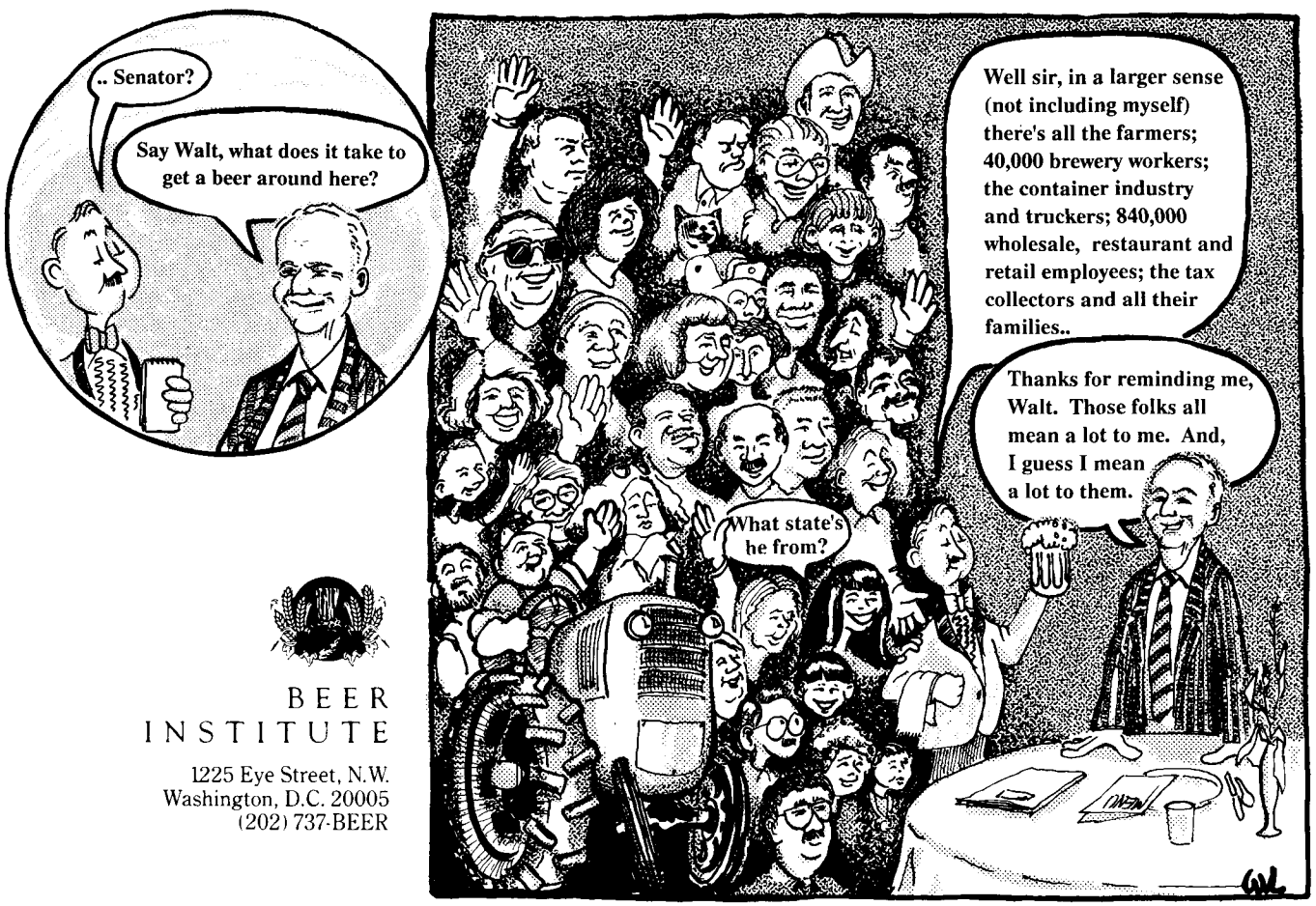
Bush's most unacclaimed triumph is one of omission, not commission. In 16 press conferences during his presidency, he has yet to make a single political mistake. Fitzwater hasn't been forced to issue a single correction or clarification of a blooper. This may not seem like much, but one senior White House official reminded me of his first, painful day as a Reagan aide—the day Reagan made 19 mistakes in a press conference. In Bush's case, being lucky helps. At his June 8 session with reporters, he was extraordinarily restrained in condemning the Chinese government for the Tiananmen massacre. This might have laid Bush open to criticism, but before it could, Chinese dissident Fang Lizhi took refuge in the American Embassy in Beijing. To satisfy America's desire to stand up to China's brutal leaders, Bush now has to do little more than keep Fang safe. As luck would have it, that's easy.

POSTCARD TOKYO

THE ENIGMA

By Nathan Glazer

As I left Narita Airport near Tokyo, I was confronted once again by that odd mixture of waste and competence so characteristic of Japan, and so confounding to any American visitor trying to understand the basis of Japan's economic success. Eight neatly uniformed men and women handled the security machinery. How can they afford


.. Senator?
Say Walt, what does it take to get a beer around here?
Well sir, in a larger sense (not including myself) there's all the farmers; 40,000 brewery workers; the container industry and truckers; 840,000 wholesale, restaurant and retail employees; the tax collectors and all their families..
Thanks for reminding me, Walt. Those folks all mean a lot to me. And, I guess I mean a lot to them.
What state's he from?
BEER INSTITUTE
1225 Eye Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 737-BEER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to employ so many? And then they found the small penknife I carry in my toiletry bag, which has slipped through security in a half dozen countries, including Israel.

At the conference I was attending, a phalanx of young women covered the registration desk. The Americans scheduled to speak were asked to show up for a three-hour meeting the day before the conference opened. There the Japanese organizers took up in detail such pressing questions as where we should sit in the auditorium when we were not speaking, at what point we would rise to go to the podium, how we would recognize our cues (the announcements would be in Japanese), how the microphones would be attached to us, and how the platform would be arranged. One speaker noticed the lectern was too low to read from comfortably. On discussion, it was decided that a box would be needed to correct the problem. The next day a meticulously constructed box was produced.

The superfluity of man- and womanpower is evident everywhere, not least in the department stores filled with scores of uniformed young women. Ninety-five percent of young Japanese now graduate from senior high school. There is only a trickle of illegal immigration (a phenomenon that nevertheless provokes something approaching hysteria among the homogeneous and ethnocentric Japanese). So where do they find people to take all these jobs, which cannot command much status or high pay? And if they have so many people doing the kind of work for which we provide perhaps one-third as many employees, where is the vaunted Japanese efficiency?

Certainly not in the Japanese language. It imposes enormous demands on those who must learn it—that is, all Japanese. They have to master *four* systems of writing, and even the easiest eludes many Americans: *Romaji* (the Latin alphabet), which is used everywhere. One doesn't even rise to the level of an illiterate if one only knows *Romaji*. To be illiterate one has to know the next two systems of writing, the *kana*, each one of which is considerably more complicated than our alphabet. To be literate—as all Japanese are—one must also know the *kanji*, the Chinese characters that are the basis (combined with *kana*) of written Japanese. This is peculiarly unadaptable to the typewriter and its successor, the computer keyboard. Japanese typewriters are so complicated that most businesses manage without them, and the largest with only a few. Imagine the problems of adapting Japanese to the computer keyboard. The fax has been a salvation—written Japanese can now be easily communicated through the telephone system.

The cost of land is another most enormous burden that Japan places upon its enterprises. One Japanese participant at our conference on urban development told us that a 1.2 kilometer downtown link in Tokyo's alarmingly overcrowded expressway system would cost one trillion yen—that is, about $8 *billion*. Ninety-seven percent of that would pay for the land, the rest for construction.

Because of this, and because of the political and social restraints on taking land for public purposes, it is almost impossible to provide more roads for Japan's cars and trucks. The expressways within Tokyo utilized the old canals and the moats of the outer fortifications of the imperial palace. There are no such opportunities left for new limited-access roads. Below my hotel window, a major expressway snaked its way into central Tokyo. By 6 a.m. traffic moved at little more than a pedestrian's pace, with frequent stops. By comparison, traffic in New York, London, even Paris, moves like the wind. The drive into Tokyo from Narita, or out to Narita, is at least an hour and 40 minutes—the most time-consuming journey from airport to central city of any major world capital.

Given such obstacles, I wondered how the Japanese managed to build the high-speed train line between Osaka and Tokyo, a distance equal to that from Boston to Washington, D.C., in a few scant years. It was opened 25 years ago, and the trains run efficiently and rapidly every 15 minutes, putting our Amtrak Northeast corridor service to shame. How could the government afford to cut through so many miles of the most densely populated parts of Japan? It couldn't, I was told. The train was designed to run through so many tunnels and over so many high viaducts not merely as a concession to geography, it turns out, but so the government could avoid the political difficulty and expense of buying land for a right of way.

NATHAN GLAZER is professor of education and sociology at Harvard University.

Haven't we seen this act before?

THE GORBACHEV TEASE

By Martin Peretz

The cheer with which Western commentators greeted Mikhail Gorbachev's tease that the Berlin Wall might come down "when the conditions that generated the need for it disappear" is another sign of how credulous we have become in receiving blandishments from Moscow. It is not only that Gorbachev categorically denied that the Wall "was a result of an evil intention." He also asked us to acknowledge that conditions in 1961 justified its erection. More than that: since those conditions still exist today, the Wall remains a legitimate expression

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

$500.00

It's yours. Just write a brief article for FineLine, the Newsletter on Journalism Ethics, telling about an ethical dilemma you've faced in your career as a journalist.

If we accept what you've written, we'll write you a check for $500.

For more information on how you can be a contributor:

CALL TOLL-FREE 1-800-736-0897

Ask for Robin Hughes

FineLine™

The Newsletter On Journalism Ethics

600 E. Main Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40202 • 502/584-8182 • Robin Hughes, Editor • Barry Bingham, Jr., Publisher

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of policy, even a necessity.

It's important to remember that the Wall was built to imprison people who wanted to live elsewhere, and who were wanted elsewhere. Those were, and still are, the specific conditions to which Gorbachev obscurely alluded. But what lay behind these conditions? Certainly not a fact of nature or an unavoidable circumstance. The three million refugees who left prior to August 13, 1961, were not escaping simple adversity. They were fleeing what their successors persist in wanting to flee: Communist rule imposed by the Red Army of the Soviet Union. These are conditions that Mikhail Gorbachev could have a decisive hand in changing. But won't.

Who knows how many more would have fled if they had known that the Soviets would soon construct an impenetrable physical divide between what they used to call "the puppet Bonn regime" and their own satrapy to the east? The allure of exodus was a standing reproach to the doctrine and power of every Communist state: in the Soviet Union itself, throughout Central and Eastern Europe, in Cuba and Vietnam and China (and Nicaragua), and, as in Hong Kong, wherever the specter of Communist rule cast a shadow. The desire of millions to flee, and the fact that hundreds of thousands risked their lives in order to leave, were as close as these societies ever came to a true plebiscite of the popular will. People really voted with their feet. Locked in by the Wall, escapees became ever more audacious in their escape routes. Some crashed through checkpoints; others flew over the Wall in hot-air balloons.

To the East Germans this desperation was especially galling. After the Second World War, when German nationals exiled by Nazism had a choice of two Germanys to which to return, it was the Communist East that claimed to attract the more idealistic and the more humane. Bertolt Brecht used to explain that the choice was akin to that of the doctor with two syphilitic patients—an old lecher and a pregnant prostitute—but penicillin enough for just one. He would choose Communist Germany, the putative pregnant prostitute, over the incorrigibly authoritarian West Germany. Such mawkish simplifications could not survive the crush of events. The brutal suppression by tanks of the workers' rising in East Berlin in 1953 provoked even from the dependable Brecht that devastating epitaph. The government has lost its confidence in the people, he noted. "Would it not be easier / In that case for the government / To dissolve the people / And elect another?" Many of the returnees went west, following the furtive tracks of simple folk.

The Wall, even more than the ongoing repression, was a confession of Communist defeat. It was the contrivance of Nikita Khrushchev, the previous Soviet reformer, a way of addressing the crisis of disenchantment with communism. Perhaps it is understandable that Gorbachev, who has put himself against so much in the Soviet past, should be reluctant to admit the obvious about this especially telling symbol of the Party's failure to win, except through terror, the loyalty of the very people in whose name it ruled.

Despite the tense atmospherics over the Berlin question that preceded the construction of the Wall, no pundit or position paper, as Adam Ulam pointed out later, had foreseen it. Still, no one was surprised. After all, Khrushchev already had on his ledger far bloodier deeds, the bloodiest of which was called to mind during Gorbachev's visit to Bonn. While the present Soviet leader told his unaccountably ecstatic hosts that he was not yet ready to dissolve Khrushchev's Berlin enormity, in Budapest the Hungarians were retrieving from unmarked graves and reinterring the remains of the murdered victims of the 1956 Soviet invasion. The West had been checkmated, just as it would be in Berlin.

This funereal drama may augur the restoration of the rudiments of Hungarian national independence, but it is sobering to recall that it has taken nearly 35 years for Hungarians to begin to think that their country again might be their own. Analogies are not analyses. But how long will it take before Chinese masses feel confident enough, or brave enough, to challenge Party orthodoxy again? And is not President Bush's squeamishness about the events in Beijing the sign of yet another checkmate?

A Hungarian writer, reflecting on the Budapest tragedy ten years later, argued that what was at work then (and during "Polish October") was an insurrection of the elemental, "the resurgence of fundamental aspirations, like the need for fraternity, equality, genuine authority, liberty, and above all, most frequently, the need for truth." It was, in its way, a romantic, even naive revolt—from its youthful mystique of a re-created but organic community to the grave pronouncement by Imre Nagy, the longtime Communist turned revolutionary prime minister, that Hungary henceforth would be a neutral party in the competition of the great powers.

Hungary was not rewarded for its exhilaratingly dumb courage. On the contrary, Eisenhower and his otherwise routinely belligerent secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, acceded to the Russians' rout of freedom. There was handwringing and some rhetorical pretense, but little more. The Hungarians had believed implicit American promises (and some earlier, more explicit ones, too) that we would come to their aid. But as a Hungarian student poet wrote some weeks later:

> To the West
> You still want to come?
> Too late, too late.
> We are cut and fallen
> Like wheat in the reaper . . .

We know from Tocqueville that tyrannies are in danger when they ease their vigilance. The Polish stirrings and the Hungarian revolution, pursuing the lead from Mother Russia, followed a period of de-Stalinizing reforms in both countries. But it took us a generation to learn that tyrannies are in danger whether they ease their vigilance or don't. A boot stamping on a human

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Learn a foreign language... incredibly fast!

Conversing in a foreign language is a *major* social and business asset...and brings new life to the worlds of travel, entertainment, and relationships. The technique of accelerated learning, as conveyed by these proven foreign language courses, allows any one to comfortably converse in a new language within 30 days.

Accelerated learning, developed by famed learning expert **Dr. Georgi Lozanov,** is based on the premise of involving both hemispheres of the brain in the education process. The analytical or logical left side of the brain when properly activated with the musical or artistic right side of the brain both increases the speed and heightens the retention of learning.

Utilizing these untapped mental capacities of your learning ability is the basis of this unique course.

You *will learn* the language as stresslessly as a child does, by hearing new vocabulary and phrases in alternately loud, whispered and emphatic intonations, all accompanied by slow rhythmic music in digital stereo. This perfect combination of music and words allows the two halves of the brain to work together to dramatically facilitate your assimilation of the new language.

The first 15 (memory) tapes of this 30 tape package help activate the learning capacities of the brain. The second 15 (study) tapes are the very same tried and proven tapes used by the **Foreign Service Institute** to train career diplomats. This marriage of two concepts literally gives you two courses in one, providing the best of both worlds in language instruction.

Best Value! With a total of 32 cassettes plus study materials, this program represents the best value available today in language instruction. Compared to other programs, the **Accelerated Learning Series** outperforms them with twice the audio and 20 times the study material.

To correctly converse in a foreign language you must understand the meanings and intent of the native speaker. If after 30 days of listening to the study and memory tapes you are not *comfortably understanding and conversing in your new language, then return them for a full refund.*

- **Spanish Tapes $245.00**
- **French Tapes $245.00**
- **German Tapes $245.00**
- **Italian Tapes $245.00**
- **Japanese, Chinese $265.00***

For faster service — credit card orders only —

Order Now!
Call Toll-Free 1·800·782·5566

Or write to:
BUSINESS CLASS, INC.
DEPARTMENT NR
350 WEST COLORADO BOULEVARD
PASADENA, CA 91105

Please add $7.00 shipping & handling
California residents add 6½% sales tax.

***New! Available Summer '89**

"American Managers with Language Skills Open More Doors"
— Wall Street Journal Editional

As an additional bonus, two 90-minute vocabulary tapes, the 100-page **How To Learn A Foreign Language** (used by Peace Corps, CIA), plus the American Express International Traveller's Dictionary in the language you choose to study.

BONUS OFFER!!

"American ignorance of other tongues has been hurting American business executives in their competition for markets with multilingual counterparts from Japan and Western Europe."
— The New York Times

"Company and marketing executives will find after 1992 that it is a handicap not to be fairly conversant with at least one other major European language, and preferably two or three."
— The London Times

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

face will not always command obedience; it will only rarely result in efficiency or productivity; it will never issue in initiative or daring for official ends. That is why communisms in power are ultimately forced to seek compromises with popular sentiment. It is why Deng Xiaoping made concessions to the market idea. But in China now, as in Hungary in 1956, the concessions demanded are so fundamental as to be intolerable to the authorities. Tanks are the preferred alternative.

So it is not merely a lack of material well-being that has been eating away at communism for decades, corroding the mobilized enthusiasms of the propaganda state. People don't take great risks or die for a trade-off. What animated the streets of Budapest in 1956, the shipyards of Gdansk in 1980, and Tiananmen Square this year was the idea, so long derided in Marxism and at many American universities, of "bourgeois" liberties. These are the formal codified rights from which genuine obligations derive. They include centrally the right to oppose and to persuade others to oppose. What's more: the right to have that opposition count and be counted. This means a free press and, in our time, access to high technologies of information and communication. It means elections. Don't be surprised if it also comes to mean everywhere a multiparty political system—the entire panoply of Western political institutions, and the Western idea as well of civil society altogether independent of politics.

This is not what Gorbachev intends. It explains his lapidary comments on Chinese developments: he daren't tempt the citizens of Moscow to mount the kind of peaceful mass protests launched and put down in Beijing. It is also only one reason he won't pull down the Wall. He is as afraid to let the people of East Germany choose as is Erich Honecker. Inevitably, now, the choice there would be for a wholly new social contract, a democratic social contract.

There is, alas, no prudent way for the West to provide any of the peoples in the Soviet orbit with an immediate opportunity to make that choice. But our diplomacy should be geared to hastening the time when they will be able to do so. We haven't even been assertive in pushing bilateral talks with the hard-line governments of the now fragile Warsaw Pact. In fact, the present behavior of most of the NATO allies, not least the Germans, is likely to encourage Gorbachev and his comrades to believe that they can get Western aid and Western trade without great reciprocal measures in the currency of freedom—especially in those countries (the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria) whose leaders are still reflexively faithful to Soviet power. Increased economic and political contacts between West and East is important, but is hardly a sufficient purpose of a democratic foreign policy. If that is all it amounts to in the end, it would be tantamount to another betrayal of freedom's martyrs. We've done that often enough.

ON THE HILL

AUTOPILOT DEMOCRACY

By Zachary Citron

You can say many nasty things about Congress, but you can't say that it's oblivious to its impotence. Legislators realize how immobilized they are by their fear of offending constituents and special interests. That's why they've taken to distancing themselves from the diciest decisions.

One approach is to surrender power to bodies better able to exercise it. Take the recent base-closing commission, a bipartisan panel authorized to decide which military bases have outlived their usefulness; Congress confined its own power to rejecting the whole list or accepting it. The Gramm-Rudman deficit reduction law provides a somewhat different form of willful abdication. After years of indiscipline, Congress agreed to put a gun to its own head in the form of a "sequestering" mechanism that automatically cuts the budget—somewhat crudely—if Congress fails to do so itself. This provides not only an incentive to pare the budget, but political cover for making tough choices. Then there is the quadrennial commission on government salaries, which this year made the ill-fated recommendation for a 50 percent pay hike for senators and representatives and other federal officials. Members of Congress, it seems, are just as nervous about raising their own salaries as they are about voting for budget cuts that hurt constituents.

These attempts to escape fallout for unpopular decisions don't sit well with purists. "Government by commission" and "autopilot government" are denounced as anti-democratic and cowardly. What's needed, we are told, is not more government gimmicks, but the "political will" to make the tough decisions. Thus there has been satisfaction in some corners over the lackluster results of these gimmicks: obviously, the pay raise didn't work out quite as planned; the Gramm-Rudman law is increasingly seen as flawed, its targets for deficit reduction now blatantly evaded; and though the base-closing commission was widely hailed only months ago as a success, it turns out that of the 86 "military installations" it is shutting down, only 34 are bases, and only half of those qualify as major bases. The other 52 condemned installations consist of dilapidated stand-alone housing from the 1950s. The $2 billion in savings that the commission was once expected to produce has shrunk to $700 million.

But it would be a mistake to dismiss government by autopilot as a short-lived fad. It is a response to a real

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

problem that shows no signs of abating. Over the years Congress has become more heavily hamstrung by special interests, and thus more negligent of the public interest. As Gregg Easterbrook showed in the *Atlantic* several years ago ("What's Wrong with Congress"), this trend is in large part due to uses of new information technology (computerized mass mail, lobbyists' data bases, etc.) that seem unlikely to go away. And recent news notwithstanding, attempts to correct for this trend have in fact worked fairly well. The "failures" of Gramm-Rudman and government-by-commission over the last few months are more perceived than real, and what problems there have been are correctable. Considering that this is the first generation of autopilot democracy technology, it doesn't work that badly.

To begin with, the failure of the pay-raise commission was a fluke. This system has worked fine for nearly 20 years, gradually raising federal salaries and thus helping to attract high-caliber public servants. It failed this year only because when commission chairman Lloyd Cutler made his pitch for a 50 percent raise, President Reagan, to everyone's surprise, swallowed it whole. Reagan, the champion of small government, had always pared down the pay-raise commission's proposals before forwarding them to Congress for its yes-or-no vote, and everything had gone swimmingly. But a proposed 50 percent hike was too good for radio talk-show hosts to resist, and the public furor was inevitable. Assuming future presidents are more attentive than Reagan, the mechanism should work fine.

Gramm-Rudman, a much more complex piece of machinery, is turning out to have some structural flaws. The trouble is that the across-the-board budget cuts kick in only if the *estimates* of the coming budget deficit, not the actual deficit, miss the target. (After all, the budget deficit doesn't exist at this point in the process.) And an administration pledged not to raise taxes is happy to produce hopelessly optimistic estimates of tax revenues, debt financing costs, etc., for the coming fiscal year. The other major problem is Congress's tendency to cook the budget books. Among the gimmicks: the Post Office budget has been taken "off budget"; billions of dollars in 1990 farm subsidies are being shifted to the 1989 ledger.

In principle, nothing is keeping these loopholes from being plugged. Congress could amend Gramm-Rudman to set stricter accounting procedures, ending the off-budget/on-budget game once and for all. (As in the case of Gramm-Rudman itself, voting for such a law would be politically feasible, even though the eventual consequence of this vote would be to shortchange various special interests.) As for the problem of honest estimates: ideally, the job of producing budget estimates would be taken away from the politically charged Office of Management and Budget and given to the more historically reliable Congressional Budget Office. Unfortunately, a 1986 Supreme Court ruling insisted that this power reside in the hands of the executive branch alone. So a solution to phony estimates will have to be more imaginative: a new formula, for example, that makes Gramm-Rudman spending targets a function not only of next year's estimated revenues, but of the last year's (or the last several years') actual revenues.

Even without some such overhaul, there is a limit on the amount of fudging that can go on. A disincentive for grossly dishonest estimates lies in the fact that the people who make them have to look at themselves in the mirror every morning—and look their colleagues in the eye. OMB's economists can get away with a 15 percent or 20 percent fudge on the estimates, but once their exaggeration gets much wilder, they risk getting laughed out of town. For that reason, Congress certainly will face a bona fide showdown with Gramm-Rudman next year. No plausible combination of accounting gimmicks and sunny forecasts will get the estimated deficit down to the target of $64 billion without some real budget cutting (or tax raising). So Congress can either do the job, surrender to the sequestering, or admit an embarrassing defeat and amend or abolish Gramm-Rudman. That is exactly the aim of Gramm-Rudman: make the alternatives to real deficit reduction as unpalatable as the reduction itself.

In the case of base closings, the watering down of the original idea has been more subtle. No major base in the country had closed in 12 years when the commission's closure list got the final go-ahead in April. So the commission made real progress by any standard. Among the reasons it didn't make more is the requirement that all listed bases recoup the cost of closure within six years. As a result of this myopic provision, the commissioners note in their final report, "many otherwise sound actions were discarded." Commissioners also complained of a crash schedule—seven or eight weeks to cut nearly a billion dollars.

These problems, obviously, could be corrected in the event of a repeat performance by a base-closing committee. Unfortunately, no "next time" for base closings is now contemplated. The political gymnastics involved in pushing through the current plan were deemed too exhausting. For those representatives whose districts were unaffected by the latest round of base closings, that was the beauty of the plan—an unofficial moratorium on further closings. (Among the bases that survived was the archetypal example of waste and redundancy used by Representative Richard Armey to justify the base-closing commission in the first place: Loring Air Force Base, built in the 1950s in an inhospitable corner of the Maine wilderness to facilitate bomber runs to Moscow, and sustained since then by the clout of Senator William Cohen and other politicians from Maine.)

The only truly fundamental limit on the number of bases the commission can close is set by simple political mathematics. Since every member of Congress whose district houses a targeted base is bound to vote against the list—and perhaps convince a few friends to go along—the list can't be lengthy. But the solution to this is easy: let the commission take bite-size chunks, as it did this time, and reassemble it every five years to look for more victims.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Critics of autopilot government tend to couch their arguments in moral terms. The real problem, they say, is the character of the legislators themselves: few of them have the virtue that James Madison, et al., hoped would help statesmen defy the winds of public opinion when the public interest so dictated. But even if the moral quality of politicians has declined over time, the point is moot, since no one can figure out how to reverse the decline. Maybe someday we'll know how to genetically engineer members of Congress who don't mind losing elections. Until then, placing tough and critical decisions at arm's length from Congress—while keeping Congress ultimately responsible for them—is a reasonable compromise with human nature, and one that warrants further exploration.

Opponents of this approach got some prominent support during the base-closing episode. Illinois Representative Dan Rostenkowski said commissions "succeed only in bringing this institution into disrepute." This complaint would have carried more weight had the commission's biggest closure, Chanute Air Force Base, not been in his home state. Similarly, House Republican conference chairman Jerry Lewis, who also had a big base closing in his district, called it all "a classic demonstration to the American public of just how incapable the Congress is of handling the most fundamental of our responsibilities." It's clear what these men of principle demand: more shelter from the political storm.

ZACHARY CITRON is a former TNR reporter-researcher.

The Global Zeitgeist Checklist: Italy

1. THE NAME OF THE ROSE ✓

Reds in crisis. Moscow, Warsaw, Budapest . . . Rome? 1989 could mean the end of Italian Eurocommunism. New leader Achille Occhetto has worked for a year to restore his party's image (even banning smoking at meetings), but his battle was lost at Tiananmen Square. Now even old Party members want to abandon the hammer and sickle, and perhaps the party's name. But they face obstacles not just ideological, but practical: in Italy's multiparty system, all the good names are taken. Leading candidate: the Labor Party.

2. DUCE SEEKS POST (REFERENCES) ✓

Presidency. Once again the government has fallen, and once again Italians are wondering what to do. Former Socialist Prime Minister Bettino Craxi, Italy's most popular politician, has an idea. Not satisfied with ruling his vacuous, personality-cult party, he proposes creating a strong presidency (a post he would likely win) to end the postwar parliamentary merry-go-round. It will never happen, though, because the other parties fear power-hungry Craxi more than political paralysis. They suspect that when he invokes "the America example," he means South, not North.

3. AMSTERDAM SUL MARE ✓

Drug legalization. Ten years ago Italy was an addiction-exporting country (thanks to the Mafia). Now it's a consumer: overdose deaths have risen over tenfold since 1978, and some city parks are littered with needles. The outgoing conservative government proposed a Reagan-style "drug war," but a coalition of radicals and free marketeers has captured public imagination with a legalization proposal. They may succeed. Their "International Anti-Prohibition League" is the newest political movement in Italy, and even offered a slate of candidates in June's European elections.

4. THE UNDERGROUND GOVERNMENT ✓

1992. No one loves "Europe" more than the Italians, as the recent festive European Parliament elections showed. They vote often, show up at Parliament, and propose countless new European Economic Community regulations. But they also have the worst implementation record on the continent, and the government has been dragged before the European court over 125 times for noncompliance. A contradiction? Not really: it's because national political institutions don't work that Italians are now asking to be governed from abroad. Unlike the English, they welcome the sort of intrusively regulatory post-1992 EEC being championed by leftists across Europe.

5. THE OTHER MAFIA ✓

Calabria. An Italian mother wrapped in chains has been holding a vigil in a southern public square this week to demand the return of her son, kidnapped almost two years ago. He is a victim of Italy's most dangerous mob, the *'ndrangheta*, whose secret and brutal grip on Calabria has made that region Italy's bloodiest. Its specialty is kidnapping, and its preferred targets are rich children and (curiously) pharmacists. Since, unlike the Sicilian Mafia, it has no "organization," police have almost given up tracking down its members. Public outcry over the case could persuade them to try again.

6. ROLL CALL ✓

Absenteeism. The inefficiency of Italian bureaucracy is legendary; "civil servants" seldom show up for work. But the problem isn't laziness. It's moonlighting. Three out of four officials are said to hold second jobs, mainly in the untaxed underground economy. Now there's a campaign to control this practice, and the police are raiding government offices to take attendance. Look for more memos, fewer Benettons.

7. CIAO, MAMMA ✓

Kids. The northern economic miracle has brought with it a northern-style problem: new population figures show that Italy now has the lowest birthrate *in the world.* The result will be an older population, but also a less "Italian" Italy, since immigrant birthrates are relatively high. The Italians have a reputation for racial tolerance, but look for a new xenophobia after 1992, when the free flow of immigrants within Europe begins.

MARK LILLA

Mark Lilla is at the American Academy in Rome this summer.

The Zeitgeist Checklist is a creation of Charles Paul Freund.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Treating the symptoms of the drug problem.

CRACKDOWN

By James Q. Wilson and John J. DiIulio Jr.

According to the projections, crime was supposed to be under control by now. The postwar baby-boom generation, which moved into its crime-prone years during the early 1960s, has grown up, yielding its place to the (proportionately) less numerous baby-bust generation. With relatively fewer 18-year-olds around, we should all be walking safer streets.

And in fact for most people crime *has* gone down. The Census Bureau's victimization surveys tell us that between 1980 and 1987 the burglary rate declined by 27 percent, the robbery rate by 21 percent. Despite what we hear, 3,000 fewer murders were committed in 1987 than in 1980. Even in some big cities that are in the news for the frequency with which their residents kill each other, the homicide rate has decreased. Take Los Angeles: despite freeway shootings and gang warfare, there were 261 fewer murders in 1987 than in 1980, a drop of more than 20 percent.

But in specific enclaves the horror stories are all too true. In south central Los Angeles, in much of Newark, in and around the housing projects of Chicago, in the South Bronx and Bedford-Stuyvesant sections of New York, and in parts of Washington, D.C., conditions are not much better than they are in Beirut on a bad day. Drugs, especially crack, are sold openly on street corners; rival gangs shoot at each other from moving automobiles; automatic weapons are carried by teenagers onto school playgrounds; innocent people hide behind double-locked doors and shuttered windows. In Los Angeles there is at least one gang murder every day, Sundays included. A ten-foot-high concrete wall is being built around the junior high school one of us attended, in order, the principal explained, to keep stray bullets from hitting children on the playground.

The problem is drugs and the brutal struggles among competing gangs for control of the lucrative drug markets. The drug of choice is crack (except in Washington, where it is PCP). The crack craze has led to conditions far worse than were found in these same neighborhoods a decade or so ago, when heroin was the preferred drug. The reasons for the change are not reassuring.

Crack is a stimulant; heroin is a sedative. Crack produces exceptional euphoria; heroin produces, after a quick "rush," oblivion. Crack (and PCP) addicts are often stimulated to acts of violence and daring that make them dangerous to themselves as well as to others; heroin addicts are rarely violent when high—the drug even depresses the sexual drive.

Crack is marketed by competitive distribution systems, some of whose members are fighting—literally—to establish monopoly control. Heroin (at least on the East Coast) was marketed in a criminal environment dominated by established monopolies that were well equipped, in muscle and in political connections, to protect their market shares with a minimum of random violence.

Crack users have no attractive chemical alternative. The drug is far more rewarding than any substitute. Heroin users who had progressed to the point where they wanted nothing but relief from the pains of withdrawal and the diseases caused by intravenous injection could take oral methadone. The heroin substitute, though addictive, required no injections, prevented withdrawal pains, and (in the correct dosages) produced little or no "high."

In short, certain neighborhoods of our larger cities are being ravaged by a drug that consumers find more alluring than heroin, that stimulates rather than sedates its users, that suppliers must use violence to sell, and that therapists are at a loss to manage by chemical means.

Attempting to suppress the use of drugs is very costly. Some people therefore conclude that we must eliminate all the costs of law enforcement by repealing the laws that are being enforced. The result would be less crime, fewer and weaker gangs, and an opportunity to address the public health problems in a straightforward manner.

But legalizing drugs would also entail costs. Those costs are hard to measure, in part because they are to a large degree moral and in part because we have so little experience with legalized drugs.

There is an obvious moral reason for attempting to discourage drug use: the heavy consumption of certain

JAMES Q. WILSON is the Collins Professor of Management and Public Policy at UCLA and co-author of *Crime and Human Nature* (Simon and Schuster). JOHN J. DIIULIO JR. teaches politics at Princeton University and is the author of *Governing Prisons* (Free Press).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

drugs ravages human character. These drugs—principally heroin, cocaine, and crack—are for many people powerfully reinforcing. The pleasure or oblivion they produce leads many users to devote their lives to seeking pleasure or oblivion, and to do so regardless of the cost in ordinary human virtues, such as temperance, duty, and sympathy. The dignity, autonomy, and productivity of users is at best impaired, at worst destroyed.

Some people think society has no obligation to form and sustain the character of individuals. Libertarians would leave all adults free to choose their own habits and seek their own destiny so long as their behavior did not cause any direct harm to others. But most people, however willing they may be to tolerate human eccentricities and support civil liberties, act as if they believe that government, as the agent for society, is responsible for helping to instill certain qualities in the citizenry. This was the original reason for mandatory schooling. We not only want to train children to be useful, we want to train them to be decent. It is also the reason that virtually every nation that has been confronted by a sharp increase in addiction to any psychoactive substance, including alcohol, has enacted laws designed to regulate or suppress its use.

Great Britain once allowed physicians to prescribe opiates for addicts. The system worked reasonably well so long as the addicts were middle-class people who had become hooked as a consequence of receiving painkillers in hospitals. But when thrill-seeking youth discovered heroin, the number of addicts increased *40-fold*, and so Britain ended the prescription system. It was replaced at first with a system of controlled dispensation from government clinics, and then with a system of substituting methadone for heroin coupled with the stringent enforcement of the laws against the latter.

Even if we were to decide that the government had no responsibility for character formation and should regulate only behavior that hurts other people, we would still have to figure out what to do about drug-dependent people—because such dependency does hurt other people. A heroin addict dreamily enjoying his euphoria, a crack smoker looking for the next high, a cocaine snorter eager for relief from his depression—these users are not likely to be healthy people, productive workers, good parents, reliable neighbors, attentive students, or safe drivers. Moreover, some people are harmed by drugs that they have not chosen to use. The babies of drug-dependent women suffer because of their mothers' habits. We all pay for drug abuse in lowered productivity, more accidents, higher insurance premiums, bigger welfare costs, and less effective classrooms.

The question is whether the costs of drug use are likely to be higher when the drug is illegal or when it is legal. In both cases society must pay the bill. When the drug is illegal, the cost consists of the law enforcement costs (crime, corruption, extensive and intrusive policing), the welfare costs (poorer health, lost wages, higher unemployment benefits, more aid to families with dependent children, and various treatment and prevention programs), and the moral costs (debased and degraded people). If the drug were legal, the bill would consist primarily of the welfare costs and the moral costs. And there would still be law enforcement costs: the costs of enforcing tax collection if the drugs were sold, or of preventing diversion if the drugs were distributed through the health care system, and the costs in either case of keeping the drugs out of the hands, lungs, and veins of minors. Legalization without some form of regulation is inconceivable; the more stringent the regulation, the higher the law enforcement bill.

Which scenario will be costlier? The answer chiefly depends on how many people will use the drug. We have a rough idea of how many people regularly use heroin and cocaine despite its illegality. How many will regularly use it under the legal scenario?

No one really knows, but it will almost surely be many more than now. The free market price of cocaine is probably no more than five percent of its present black market price. Even allowing for heavy taxes, Stanford's John Kaplan has estimated that the free market price would be no more than 20 percent of what it now costs. The consumption of a widely desired, pleasure-inducing substance without question will increase dramatically if the price is cut by 80 percent to 95 percent.

Moreover, the true price of the drug is the monetary cost plus the difficulty and inconvenience of the search for it and the risk associated with consuming a product of unknown quality. Though drugs are sold openly on the streets of some communities, for most people—especially for novice, middle-class users—they are hard to come by and often found only in threatening surroundings. Legalization will make the drug more attractive, even if the price actually rises, by reducing the costs of searching for it, negotiating a transaction, and running the risk of ingesting a dangerous substance. The combined effect of lowered market prices and lowered transaction costs will be very great.

Just how great cannot be known without trying it. And one cannot try it experimentally, for there is no way to run a meaningful experiment. The increase in use that would occur if people in one neighborhood or patients at one clinic were allowed to buy the drug at its market cost can give us no reliable information on how many people would use the drug if it were generally available. And the experiment would have irreversible effects. Moreover, as the British experience showed, there is no such thing as "controlled distribution." Inevitably there will be massive leaks of government-supplied drugs into the black market.

We already have the "benefits" of one quasi-experiment. So long as cocaine was available only in its relatively expensive powdered form, its use was pretty much concentrated among more affluent people. But with the invention of crack, which can be sold in single

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

low-priced doses rather than by the high-priced gram, cocaine use increased sharply.

We believe that the moral and welfare costs of heavy drug use are so large that society should continue to enforce the laws against its use for the sake of keeping the number of users as small as possible. But we recognize that by adopting this position, we are placing a heavy burden on those poor communities where drug use is endemic. We are allowing these neighborhoods to be more violent than they would be if the drug were legal. Since we do not live in such communities, we must ask ourselves whether our preferences can be justified to people who do.

The answer to that question is given by the testimony of those who live in the midst of the problem. They want drugs kept illegal. They say so and their representatives in Congress say so. We hope that our libertarian critics will not accuse the people of Watts, Anacostia, and the South Bronx of suffering from false consciousness on this matter. These people know what drug use is and they don't like it.

But if drugs are to be kept illegal, we have a special responsibility to prevent the streets of inner-city neighborhoods from being controlled by those who seek to profit from the trade. We have not done a very good job of this.

In some places there may not be enough police. In others the cops are just badly used, as when the focus is on making a case against "Mr. Big," the local drug kingpin. There are two things wrong with this. First, nothing is easier than replacing Mr. Big; indeed, often the police get evidence on him from tips supplied by his would-be replacement. Meanwhile the distribution of drugs goes on unabated. Second, arresting Mr. Big does nothing to improve the lives of the decent people in the neighborhood who want the drug dealers off the street.

Many cities, notably New York, have recognized this and are concentrating on street-level dealers. The NYPD has wrested control from the drug dealers in parts of the Lower East Side, all of Washington Square Park, much of West 107th Street, and other places. But they have done so at a cost, what Aric Press of *Newsweek* calls the criminal justice equivalent of bulimia. The police go on an arrest binge, and then, "overwhelmed and overfed, the rest of the system—prosecutors, defenders, judges, and jailers—has spent its days in an endless purge, desperately trying to find ways to move its population before it gets hit with another wave tomorrow." The purgatives included granting early release to some inmates and trying to shift other city prisoners to state penitentiaries; pressuring the governor to authorize the appointment of more judges while encouraging faster plea bargaining to clear the crowded dockets; and building "temporary" holding facilities for new arrestees.

The District of Columbia has begun to enter the bulimia phase. The number of people going through the criminal justice system on drug charges has exploded. Between 1983 and 1987 drug arrests increased by 45 percent, drug prosecutions by over 500 percent, drug convictions by over 700 percent. Clearly judges and prosecutors were starting to get tough. But until very recently, the toughness stopped at the jailhouse door. As recently as 1986, only seven percent of the adults arrested on drug charges—and only 20 percent of those convicted on such charges—were sent to the city's principal correctional facility at Lorton. Then, suddenly, the system lurched into overdrive. Between 1986 and 1987 the number of drug incarcerations more than doubled, so that by the end of the year an adult arrested on a drug charge had a one-in-five chance of going to jail, and one convicted on such a charge had a one-in-two chance of winding up at Lorton.

This means that, until very recently, the price of drug dealing in Washington has been quite low. Those who say that "law enforcement has failed" should remember that until the last two years it was barely tried. Police Chief-designate Isaac Fulwood says that the same dealer may be arrested eight or nine times in the space of a few weeks. The city has been operating a revolving-door criminal justice system.

One reason for the speed with which the door revolves is that in Washington, as in most parts of the country, the prisons are jammed full. Another factor is that professional drug dealers know they can get a favorable plea bargain if they threaten to make the system give them a full trial, replete with every conceivable motion. The mere threat of such a demand is ordinarily enough to ensure that an attractive bargain is offered.

How can an overtaxed system help protect people in the drug-ridden neighborhoods? Building more conventional prisons is part of the answer, but that takes a lot of time, and no one wants them in their back yard. The goal is to take drug dealers off the streets for a longer period than the time it takes to be booked and released. One step is to ensure that no good arrest is washed out for want of prosecution because of a shortage of judges, prosecutors, and public defenders. These are not cheap, but candidates for these posts are more readily available than vacant lots on which to build jails.

Nevertheless, prisons are still needed and can be had, provided we are willing to think of alternatives to conventional holding tanks. One is to reserve regular prison space for major traffickers and to use parts of present (or all of former) military camps as boot camps for lower-level dealers. At these minimum-security camps, inmates would receive physical training, military discipline, and drug-abuse treatment, all under the direction of military personnel and with the aim of preparing them for a life that would combine, to the extent possible, the requirement of regular drug tests and the opportunity for gainful employment.

Meanwhile, the chances of released inmates rejoining old gangs can perhaps be reduced by enforcing a law, such as the one recently passed in California, that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

makes mere membership in certain gangs illegal and attaches civil or criminal penalties to parents who knowingly allow their children to join them.

Critics of punishment object that (1) incarceration is not a deterrent, either because young drug dealers are not "rational" or because drug trafficking is so lucrative as to make short stays behind a fence worth it; and that (2) the only true solution to the drug problem is to reduce the demand for drugs by education and treatment. We are tempted to respond to these views by pointing out that, insofar as we can tell, each is wrong in whole or in substantial part. Instead, let's assume that these views are entirely correct. They are also irrelevant.

At this stage, we are not trying to deter drug sales or reduce drug use. All we wish to do is to reassert lawful public control over public spaces. Everything else we may wish to achieve—reducing the demand for drugs, curing the users of drugs, deterring the sale of drugs—can only be done after the public and the police, not the dealers and the gangs, are in charge of the neighborhoods. In the short run, this can be done by repeatedly arresting every suspected dealer and user and sending them through the revolving door. If we cannot increase the severity of the penalties they face, we can at least increase the frequency with which they bear them. In police terms, we want to roust the bad guys.

After the bad guys find they are making repeated trips to the same prison camps, the decent people of the neighborhood must form organizations willing and able to work with the police to keep the bad guys from regaining control of the streets. The Kenilworth-Parkside area of Washington shows what can be done. A few years ago this neighborhood, the site of a public housing project, was an open-air drug market that spawned all manner of crime. In 1982 a tenants' committee led by Kimi Gray formed a corporation and assumed control of the housing project. Though the residents were primarily unwed mothers living on welfare, over the next five years their association collected the rents, ran the buildings, enforced school attendance on the children, and got rid of the addicts. In 1988 the association signed a contract to purchase the project from the government.

A key to the Kenilworth-Parkside group's accomplishment lies in its cooperation with the police. Gray and her colleagues set up neighborhood watch groups, held police-community meetings, and helped the police find and arrest drug dealers and street criminals.

Much is made these days of "community-oriented" policing. Both of us have written favorably about it and the problem-solving, police-neighborhood collaboration that lies at its heart. But the success stories are always in communities in which the people are willing to step forward and the police are willing to meet them halfway. Where open-air drug markets operate every night, where Uzi-toting thugs shoot rivals and bystanders alike, it is a brave or foolhardy resident who will even testify against a criminal, much less lead an anti-crime crusade. But once the police have shown that they can control the streets, even if the dealers they have chased off spend only brief (albeit frequent) periods in prison camp, there is an opportunity to build new partnerships.

The drugs-crime problem ultimately will be solved only when the demand for drugs is dramatically reduced. Though it is necessary to make major investments in overseas crop eradication, the interdiction of international drug shipments, and the control of our borders, there is scarcely an experienced law enforcement officer in the country who does not believe that controlling the sources of supply is much more than a holding operation.

How do we reduce demand? We do not know. Realizing that is the beginning of wisdom. The greatest mischief is to assume that the demand for drugs will decline only when there is less racism and poverty, better schools and more jobs, more religion, and better-quality television.

Recall how the heroin epidemic finally ended. At one time the number of new addicts seemed to be rising exponentially despite the ending of the Turkish supply of illicit opium and the breaking up of the French processing laboratories. Now we have a fairly stable number of confirmed addicts whose ranks seem not to be increasing and may be decreasing. This was accomplished by three things: death, testing, and methadone.

Youngsters who were ready to ignore the lectures of their teachers or the blandishments of public-service television commercials were not so ready to ignore the testimony of their everyday experiences. Heroin addicts were dying from drug overdoses, dirty needles, and personal neglect. Doing heroin no longer seemed as glamorous as it did when one first heard about it from jazz musicians and big-time crooks.

The military began a rigorous program of testing, which continues to this day. There were sanctions attached to being found out—often a delay in being returned home, possibly military punishment, and probably a dishonorable discharge. Drug use in the military dropped dramatically, and has stayed low.

Heroin addicts who were burned out by their long and increasingly unsatisfying bout with the drug often turned to methadone as a way of easing the pain and stabilizing their lives. If they stayed with it, they had a good chance of benefiting from the counseling and training programs made available to them.

These three prevention measures are not likely to be as effective with cocaine and crack addicts. Some users are dying from these drugs, but smoking crack still seems to many users to be far more exciting and much less dangerous than injecting heroin. In time, enough people will ruin their lives so that even the fantastic high that crack produces will begin to seem unattractive to potential users. But that time is not here yet.

Testing works, but only if it is done rigorously and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with real consequences, ranging from immediate counseling to discharge or punishment. As yet few civilian institutions seem prepared (or able) to do what the armed forces did. It is hard enough for private employers to test, and they are not subject to the search-and-seizure provisions of the Fourth Amendment. Opposition from employee groups and civil libertarians shows little sign of abating. Some government agencies are testing, but they are doing so gingerly, usually by limiting tests to workers such as prison guards and customs agents, who are in obviously sensitive positions. It is hard to imagine many schools adopting a testing program, though some are trying.

And there is no cocaine equivalent for methadone, though science may yet find one.

That doesn't leave much: some school-based drug-education programs that look promising but have not (as yet) proved their efficacy, and many treatment programs that can have some success—provided the patient is willing to stay in them.

"Willing": that is the key. Heavy drug use is an addiction about which we have, in other contexts, already learned a great deal. Fifty years ago we knew as little about dealing with alcoholism as we now know about cocaine abuse. Today we know enough about alcoholism to realize the key steps to coping with it.

First and foremost: addicts will not get better until they first confront the fact that they are addicts. Alcoholics Anonymous knows this full well, making it the cornerstone of its Twelve Steps. The families of alcoholics are taught that they did not cause and can neither control nor cure the addictive behavior—the disease—of the alcoholic. The deaths of others and an inescapable testing program can help provoke among drug users what the destruction of the lives of alcoholics sometimes stimulates—a recognition that they are powerless in the face of the drug and that they need the help of others like themselves.

Among the heroin treatment programs that have worked, even without methadone, are those that have involved some aspect of confrontation. Therapeutic communities provide this, but they tend to reach relatively few people. The civil commitment program (technically, Civil Addict Program) in California reached more. It worked this way: an addict (usually arrested by the police) was incarcerated for a brief period, followed by release into the community under instructions to report regularly for a urine test. A parolee with a dirty urine test was reincarcerated on the original charge.

Douglas Anglin and William McGlothlin at UCLA were able to compare the drug use of two similar groups—one that had been sent through the Civil Addict Program and another that had been sent to it but was quickly released from its testing requirements through some legal error made in the commitment proceedings. Those who went through the full program reduced their narcotic use and criminality over a five-year follow-up period at a rate three times greater than the control group.

This raises the possibility that frequent drug testing, backed up by the revocation of parole or of probation for those who fail, may help produce (out of either fear or growing self-awareness) that willingness to confront the fact of addiction that is the prerequisite of successful treatment. Though experts disagree about the role of coercion in treatment programs, an impressive number of studies suggest that cocaine-using arrestees will rarely volunteer for treatment unless they are subject to considerable legal pressure.

Harry Wexler and Douglas Lipton, two experienced drug researchers, have summarized what they have learned about intervening with drug offenders this way: "The criminal justice system must frequently and systematically supervise cocaine-heroin users so that they have less time for crime and drug use." This means urine testing as a condition of probation or parole.

The advocates of treatment and prevention sometimes argue as if these programs can be made to work under wholly voluntary arrangements, provided enough treatment slots are available. Indeed, the helping atmosphere makes treatment seem preferable to the callous toughness of law enforcement strategies. This is sometimes true, but for the majority of addicts it is a serious error, akin to thinking that alcoholics will follow their doctors' advice, if there are enough doctors around. Alcoholics need some measure of coercion; AA supplies it, through the peer pressure generated at regular meetings of other alcoholics. Cocaine users will require even more pressure because coke is far more pleasure-giving than alcohol.

Much of what we have said here will seem pointless to those who still believe that every social problem must be viewed as an indictment of society and its failure to eliminate the "root causes" of its ills. But when it comes to addictive behaviors, the symptoms *are* the causes. We do not know why some people try cocaine and then drop it, others try it and abuse it, and still others do not try it at all. We do not know the answers to those questions with respect to alcohol abuse either, and we have been studying that "symptom" pretty seriously for the last half century. What we do know is that addiction is a self-sustaining reaction that spreads as the addictive drug becomes more easily available.

We must begin with the facts, not with theories. The facts are these: some parts of our cities are being destroyed by gangs competing for the right to destroy lives by selling drugs. Those gangs have to be defeated, even if it means hiring more judges and building more correctional facilities. After that we can help communities reorganize themselves so that the good people control the streets and the teachers, doctors, and scientists have a chance to find out what will prevent another addictive epidemic from breaking out when some chemist discovers a drug that is even cheaper and more euphoria-inducing than crack. And that last event, we can be certain, will happen. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Anything Goes?

Good taste is in trouble these days. The very idea of good taste is decried as stuffy. These attacks imply that the issue itself is old hat. Obviously, the smug, self-conscious worship of good taste is a deadening ritual, but so—and more oppressively so—is trendiness.

This decrying of good taste plays right into Paul Bartel's hands. For some years he has been trying to make a career by writing and directing and acting in films that offend good taste, as he conceives it. His latest, **Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills** (Cinecom), tries even harder. I left a press screening after about an hour, urged by what I'm still obliged to think of as good taste. The offense had nothing to do with the broad sexual action and talk. (At this late date in filmgoing?) I left because of the swamping tedium of the piece.

For a week afterward I lived in fear that *Class Struggle* would get reviews that forced me to go back and see the whole thing, reviews so eager to be unshocked by the sex that they ignored or exalted the low quality of the filmmaking. My fears were realized. Those reviews appeared, in at least some places; so I went to a theater and saw it all—to support this attempt to distinguish between irreverence and the way it's handled.

Class Struggle was written by Bruce Wagner from a story by him and Bartel. Wagner says that his screenplay, "pretentious as it may sound, is a kind of radicalized version of *Rules of the Game* or *Smiles of a Summer Night*." If it's any comfort to him, some reviewers have been equally pretentious. *Class Struggle*, like the two masterworks named, is about amours among masters, mistresses, and servants, with a lot of upward and downward mobility. It's also possible to see that with truly daring writing, instead of fumbling aphorisms and merely explicit sex talk, the script might have been something like what Wagner says it is. But he, like Bartel, is so proud of his daring that daring is all he provides.

A wealthy Beverly Hills widow, Jacqueline Bisset, invites her neighbor, a wealthy divorcée, Mary Woronov, to spend a weekend with her while exterminators are at work in Woronov's house. Bisset has a teenage daughter, Rebecca Schaeffer; a resident "thinologist," Bartel; a houseman, Robert Beltran; and a revenant husband, Paul Mazursky. Woronov brings with her a 14-year-old son with leukemia, Barret Oliver; her playwright brother, Ed Begley Jr.; his new black wife, Arnetia Walker; her houseman, Ray Sharkey; and she is pursued by her ex-husband, Wallace Shawn. The basic plot gimmick is that the two housemen make a bet about bedding each other's boss, but there is so much bedding—and flooring and sofaing—before the weekend is over that the gimmick almost gets lost. And isn't missed.

The filmmakers think the dialogue so smart that they provided the press with a page of excerpts. Two samples: "Sweetheart, more and more I think 'abuse' is a strictly Californian concept." "I never touched her—I mean, I touched her, she touched me, but that was all. Nothing happened." The people who think that these lines sparkle also think that leukemia and hunger in Africa are comic subjects.

Bartel's directing is on a worse level. He begins with a title in showy cursive gold letters on a red plush background while a soppy waltz is heard. This immediately clues us in to the level of end-of-summer resort-hotel entertainment we are in for, a level that is strenuously maintained throughout. The pacing is as sluggish as a home movie, distended further by long pans over grounds and hallways. Scenes are played as if we were seeing the first run-through. The directing is about as competent as that of the Kuchar Brothers, those teenage twins who were turning out Hollywood parodies in their Bronx basement 30 years ago.

As for the acting, any director who makes Bisset look bad has a lot to answer for at the Judgment Seat. Begley, a cheerily good actor, seems uncomfortable—understandably so. Of the others not much could be expected. Woronov is the kind of person (actor is not really the appropriate word) one expected to see in off-off-Broadway shows of the 1960s and

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Dead Poets Society. *An echo of Vigo's* Zéro de conduite. *In a proper prep school a heterodox teacher, Robin Williams, stirs up his class with the works of great writers. A bit neat and predictable, but well made. (Reviewed 6/26/89)* **Do the Right Thing.** *Spike Lee's deceptively pleasant film, about a black block in Brooklyn, explodes toward the end. A warning? A threat? At any rate, not a fantasy. Lee, who is also in the film, has grown greatly as a director. (7/3/89)* **Lawrence of Arabia.** *Find some friends who think it's just Hollywood hoopla and persuade them to see it. Your reward is in listening to them later. (2/20/89)* **Little Vera.** *A Soviet domestic drama that takes* glasnost *to new heights. Truths about Soviet young people, their disaffection, their prospects, told with affecting skill. (5/1/89)* **—SK**

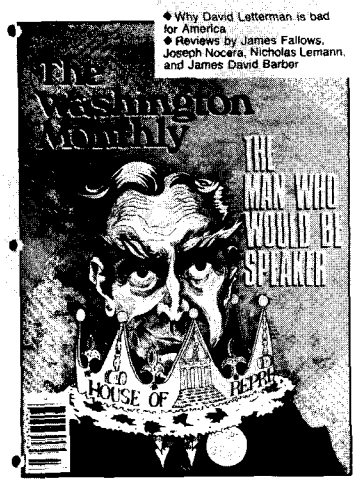
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WE KNEW WRIGHT FROM THE START

The Washington Monthly

Three years before the downfall of House Speaker Jim Wright, *The Washington Monthly* warned its readers: "If Tip O'Neill seems like the sort of guy who would write out a taxpayer endorsed check to everyone who tried to sell him swampland in Florida, Jim Wright seems more like the guy selling the land."

And that's not the first time we anticipated the news that would later make headlines....


◆ Why David Letterman is bad for America
◆ Reviews by James Fallows, Joseph Nocera, Nicholas Lemann, and James David Barber
The Washington Monthly
THE MAN WHO WOULD BE SPEAKER
HOUSE OF

► In a story we ran six years *before* the Challenger disaster, we warned that the space shuttle was unsafe, saying, "Here's the plan. Suppose one of the solid-fueled boosters fails. The plan is, you die."

► Seven months *before* the stock market crash in 1987, we warned that programmed trading and low-margin stock options could turn a bad day into Black Monday.

Consistently ahead of the mainstream press, *The Washington Monthly* "pencils in the agenda for editors and staffers as *Harper's* and *The Atlantic*, *Time* as well as *Newsweek*."

—*The Boston Globe*

Subscribe to the magazine insiders reach for first to stay ahead of the crowd. Subscribe to *The Washington Monthly* today.

"People don't just subscribe to The Washington Monthly, they read it."
—John Kenneth Galbraith

Edited by **Charles Peters**, author of *Tilting at Windmills.*

Where such writers as **James Fallows**, **Nicholas Lemann**, **Taylor Branch**, and **Michael Kinsley** got their start.

SPECIAL OFFER—$13 OFF

FOR NEW SUBCRIBERS ONLY

☐ Yes! Enter my subscription for a full year (11 issues) for only $20.00.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me later

☐ Charge my: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Credit card no. _____ Exp. _____

Signature _____

For Canadian subscriptions add $3 postage; all other foreign add $5.

Send to: The Washington Monthly
1611 Connecticut Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20009

797502

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in Andy Warhol films. Which, indeed, she was in. Shawn, a gifted writer who could have done much better by this script, is, as actor, just a lisping ninny. Mazursky, the well-known writer-director, is little more than an excrescence. The only two who are appealing are Beltran, who has vitality, and Walker, who has her own deep sexy humor.

Bartel and his friends apparently believe that if only you speak and do things that pass the usual bounds of acceptance, then any sort of acting, writing, and directing are perfectly OK—in fact, are anointed by their bravery. Those who object will only tag themselves as square or repressed, as having "good taste." Probably there's no point in recommending that Bartel and friends take a long look at two Monty Python films, *Life of Brian* and *The Meaning of Life*. The Bartel bunch shows no sign of ever achieving the irreverence that comes from wit, intellect, and talent.

New York abounds in film festivals, arranged by various countries or by various groups or in honor of a particular artist. No one could possibly see all of each one of them, along with regular film-theater fare. This is a sadness because (*a*) many of the festivals sound more interesting than theater fare of the moment and (*b*) perimeters of reference need all the expansion they can get. Recently the American Film Institute presented a group of nine European films, new and otherwise unreleased, which will also visit some other cities. All nine sounded interesting; I saw one.

Katinka was made in Denmark last year, the first film to be directed by Max von Sydow. The screenplay derives from a novel by Herman Bang, the 19th-century Danish writer who was a friend of Ibsen and helped to get Ibsen's plays produced in France. The combination of von Sydow and Bang was irresistible.

Katinka, set in a small Danish town in the 1880s, is more than competently made, richly atmospheric, easily at home in its period. Some of the actors are familiar from *Pelle the Conqueror* (made earlier), and von Sydow has directed his cast with some of the nuance and truth of his own work. Cinematically the film can't be faulted. But the story is trite.

A good-looking young man arrives in the town and falls in love with a woman who had resigned herself to an unexciting marriage and who now falls in love with the stranger. Ultimately they confess their love to each other; then he goes away. It would need something more of Flaubert than is in *Katinka* to make it engrossing. But I was grateful for the chance to see it and a little sad to think that, mild as it is, it's fluttering along into limbo.

Robert Brustein on Theater

Fairy Tailspin

Of Shakespeare's mature plays, **Cymbeline** is the least performed, and for good reason. All his late romances are filled with absurdities, but *Cymbeline* lacks the compensatory inspiration, the charged vision of *The Winter's Tale* or *The Tempest*. Through much of the play, Shakespeare is nodding, his inertia suggested by the way he borrows characters and motifs from previous work, with sinews, blood, and nerves removed. King Cymbeline, the volatile British tyrant, is an anemic Lear. Iachimo slanders Imogen in the same way Iago libels Desdemona; Imogen herself is a transvestite exile in the tradition of Viola and Rosalind. Cornelius, the physician, is a recycling of the Apothecary in *Romeo and Juliet*. And Iachimo's monologue in Imogen's bedchamber ("our Tarquin thus did softly press the rushes") borrows imagery from *The Rape of Lucrece*. The only felt energy in the play is the rage of Posthumus Leonatus over Imogen's assumed adultery, and even these fulminations echo with lines from *Hamlet* and *Othello* ("Oh vengeance, vengeance," "I'll tear her limb-meal," "Let there be no honor where there's beauty," etc.). Still able to rouse himself over his constant theme of female inconstancy, Shakespeare is nonetheless suffering from temporary creative fatigue.

Shakespeare found in Holinshed the historical source for the conflict over tribute between the ancient Britons and the Romans; the outlines of Imogen's story he borrowed from Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Some important plot details, however, seem to have no formal literary source, which has encouraged scholarly conjecture on a link between *Cymbeline* and the tradition of fairy tale, particularly the story of *Snow White*. It is this link that JoAnne Akalaitis has emphasized in her controversial Public Theater production. Locating the play "in the midst of Celtic ruins" and calling it "a Romantic fantasy in victorian England," Akalaitis has tried to force stylistic unity on this messy sprawl through a theatrical metaphor designed to justify its vagaries of plot and distentions of character. I think she succeeds for the first part of the evening—until the play spins out of control and her production starts to splinter in its wake.

But the opening scenes are lovely. Following the sounds of thunder and rain, and some perfunctory exposition in front of the curtain, we enter the fog-shrouded ruins of a garden, ravishingly designed by George Tsypin. (Tsypin's simple set pieces—two revolving boxed columns and a symmetrical moat—transform into locales as various as a wood, a bedchamber, a battlefield, through the agency of Stephanie Rudolph's exquisite projections.) We are in the bare ruined choirs of Wilkie Collins or the hidden enchantments of *The Secret Garden*.

And with the entrance of Joan MacIntosh in flaming red wig and kimono, playing the Queen with extravagant hand gestures and exaggerated professions of sincerity, distilling deadly potions in smoking vials, we are also in the storybook world of wicked stepmothers. Joan Cusack, a healthily proportioned Imogen, will remind us of Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, and Lewis Carroll's Alice. And George Bartenieff as the King, shambling about in side whiskers, dressing gown, and toque—later wearing a British redcoat over military Scottish kilts—will resemble one of those sleepy imperial clubmen in Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days*.

Hovering on the edges of the stage are four gray apparitions who seem to have escaped from *The Turn of the Screw*—Leonatus's father, his mother, and his two brothers, who died before his birth. Their ghostly presence, and the melancholy luminous arpeggios of Philip Glass's score (for synthesizer, percussion, and viola), lend a supernal quality to the play's early scenes that is sustained until well into the third act. Michael Cumpsty, puckering like Robert Goulet sucking lemons, turns Iachimo into a sour villain out of Victorian melodrama. He emerges from a trunk in Imogen's bedroom to check out the decor, steal her magic ring, and glimpse the cinque-spotted mole under her breast—the potted proof, like Desdemona's handkerchief, that she's been false to her husband.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Leonatus's wager with Iachimo over Imogen's chastity is for modern audiences one of the sticking points of the plot. Who could respect a man who bets that his friend won't be able to seduce his wife? Among Shakespeare's romantic heroes, only Leontes in *The Winter's Tale*, and possibly Bertram in *All's Well That Ends Well*, have as many porcine male characteristics.

Like Leontes, Leonatus orders his wife's death on the basis of unsubstantiated evidence. This is the stuff of tragedy, but it is also what husbands do in fairy tales, and I suspect Akalaitis's Grimm Brothers strategy was partly designed to distance us from the discordant plot. For a while her strategy succeeds—until the fairy tale goes into a tailspin. She compounds Shakespeare's anachronistic blunders (his Britons are Jacobean Englishmen; his Romans, Renaissance Italians) with the ridiculous *Duck Soup* costuming of the Roman forces, as well as by making the soothsayer, Philharmonus, into a sari-clad East Indian (in Victorian times, India was part of the British empire, not an Italian colony). The Queen's son, Cloten, a minstrel show clown in a large-checked suit, whinnies like a black Pee Wee Herman. Imogen and Pisanio navigate the stage on a bicycle and a scooter. Belarius, the banished Lord, is dressed as Robinson Crusoe, and Guiderius and Arviragus, his princely charges, as Indian braves, supplied with pigtails, decorated with war paint, and given ample opportunity to display their bare behinds. (Akalaitis seems to have a weakness for exposing male bottoms—even Iachimo shows a bit of tail emerging from his bath.)

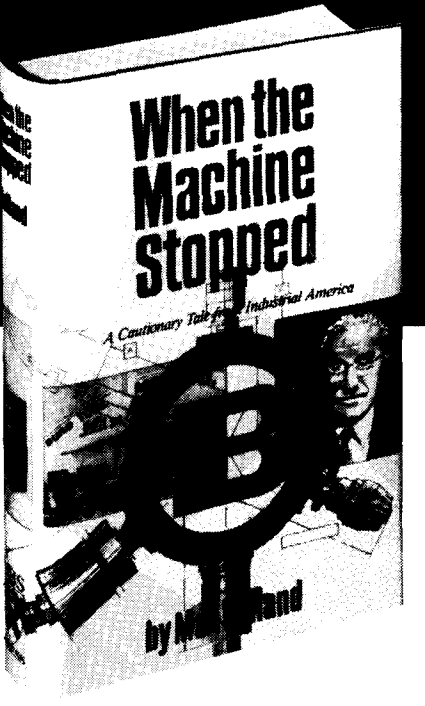
Following an impressive slow-motion battle scene—a percussive war fought between shafts of overhead light (choreographed by David Leong)—Akalaitis's concept trips on its own shoelaces. The ghostly family loses its spectral hold on us the moment they open their mouths. (They become characters in Leonatus's dream, in a crude masque considered the work of another hand and usually cut.) And what is arguably the longest—inarguably the dullest—recognition scene in Shakespeare is even further mauled through merciless camping. After being exposed to this, Cymbeline's celebrated concluding lines ("Laud we the gods / And let our crooked smokes climb up to their nostrils / From our bless'd altars") suggest that odors of another sort entirely might be reaching those sacred olfactory organs.

The New York critics were almost uniformly savage in their treatment of this show, and my halfhearted defense must begin with the confession that JoAnne Akalaitis has twice directed with my own company. But the only other Shakespeare production that solicited an assault like this was Lee Breuer's equally unconventional *Tempest* (also produced by Joseph Papp, in the Park). That was a failure too, but in each case, the director was trying to bring fresh eyes to Shakespeare's texts, not to trash them, as the critics charged. Breuer and Akalaitis are both affiliated with Mabou Mines, a group devoted to strong visual concepts, interracial casting, and performance group techniques, and they bring these commitments to their mainstream assignments. Where their Shakespeare work may be faulted, I believe—and this is a weakness of many auteurs directing classical plays—is not for its interpretive chutzpah but for the acting, which sometimes descends to mannerist exaggeration.

Breuer encouraged his *Tempest* cast to impersonate Mae West, W. C. Fields, and Sid Vicious. Akalaitis, less under the spell of movies and rock music, creates histrionic distortion through feeble casting or broad acting. Michael Cumpsty manages to fulfill the director's concept without loss of skill, and Peter Francis James is a masterly Pisanio. Joan MacIntosh keeps her womanliness and power despite a wild-and-woolly characterization, and Don Cheadle and Jesse Bor-

"Fascinating . . . the fate of Burgmaster and its brethren is crucial to the U.S. Industrial economy."
—*Business Week*

"A passionate critique . . . not unlike Tracy Kidder's *The Soul of a New Machine* in its mastery of technical detail and ability to absorb the reader in the dynamics of the corporation."
—*Los Angeles Times*



From the machine shop floor to the frenzied world of high finance, journalist Max Holland tells the life and death story of an American machine tool company named Burgmaster.

Harvard Business School Press
$22.95 *At your local bookstore or call 1-617-495-6117*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rego have a boisterous charm as the bare-assed Apache princes. But, in central roles, Joan Cusack's Imogen is largely lost in sitcom, Jeffrey Nordling's Posthumus is pallid, and that off-off-Broadway legend George Bartenieff mumbles most of the king's lines into his side whiskers. Worst of all is the Cloten of Wendell Pierce, a comic part played by an actor without humor.

Since Pierce is black, critics were confused over how Imogen could mistake Cloten's headless trunk for her husband's corpse (eyebrows were also raised over how a white queen could have given birth to a black prince). This suggests, I think, a misunderstanding of non-traditional casting in classical plays. There are certain cases—the Goodman Theatre production of *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, where the Montagues and Capulets are engaged in racial feuds—that require consciousness of color. But the fundamental purpose of non-traditional casting, as implied in the phrase, is to be colorblind. Anyway, since the only dark flesh showing on this headless corpse are the hands, it is even more unlikely that Imogen would mistake a short and pudgy Cloten for a tall and slender Leonatus—but let's not confuse the conventions of Jacobean theater with those of realism. The real problem is Pierce's characterization, not his discolored family tree.

Since criticism of this *Cymbeline*, whatever its artistic faults, seems more ideological than aesthetic, let me repeat what I wrote on the occasion of Breuer's *Tempest*. "Instead of savaging it and other productions like it, we might reflect on why the most violent reactions are usually directed not against what is conventional, mind-deadening, and banal, but rather against those very rare occasions when an artist dares to risk, and fails through a surplus of imagination and invention." The war on risk-taking is continuing to rage in critical circles, and it is continuing to drive our most inventive talents from New York. I salute Joe Papp for the courage to risk *his* reputation on their survival.

Charles L. Mee Jr.'s **The Investigation of the Murder in El Salvador** has been kicking around for a number of years now, trying to find a producer gutsy enough to stage it. Papp held the option for a while, then dropped it; my own theater considered it a number of times, and reconsidered. Now that it's been given a competent staging by David Schweizer for the New York Theatre Workshop, I can see why we producers hesitated. The theme of the play—the detachment and impotence of upper-class Americans in the face of racial inequality and revolutionary turmoil—is inseparable from its enervated style. Mee is an intelligent writer, trying to fashion the literary equivalent of Robert Wilson's gnomic, non-linear spatial tableaux. What he has produced is an avant-garde version of *The Cocktail Party* or *The Dining Room*. To watch these pale people discussing face lifts and servant problems, chattering about what's in and what's out over their champagne and canapés, is to suspect that Mee's hidden theme is how America became the first country in history to go from barbarism to decadence without ever having encountered civilization.

Mothers Unite

BY BARBARA EHRENREICH

Contested Lives: The Abortion Debate in an American Community by Faye D. Ginsburg

(University of California Press, 329 pp., $25)

At the mega-march for abortion rights in April, the most common complaint—after the difficulty of finding Portosans or an empty patch of grass to sit on—was "too bad we have to do this all over again." The truth is that we had not done "this" in the first place. In the early 1970s, there had been speak-outs on abortion, petition campaigns, some lobbying, and scattered demonstrations. There had not been, however, a massive mobilization around the abortion issue—certainly not on the scale of the campaign for the ERA a few years later, and obviously not on the scale of April 9, 1989. There had been no national debate, no widespread feminist effort to reach out to, and convince, the undecided public of the justice of what we called abortion rights. In this sense, the Supreme Court's decision in 1973 on *Roe* v. *Wade* was tragically premature.

I remember my own response to *Roe* v. *Wade*. As a member of the substream of feminism known then as the "women's health movement," I had devoted some legwork to the abortion issue: gone to organizing meetings, carried a petition around, gotten into a few arguments, mostly with doctrinally loyal Catholics. But abortion was only one among many issues, and it was an issue, many of us thought at the time, that was better settled by lawyers than marchers. When the court decriminalized abortion, we were gratified, but hardly elated. We had won, somehow, and we quickly went on to other things—campaigning to curb involuntary sterilization, for example, and for a more humane and natural approach to childbirth.

But just as *Roe* v. *Wade* cut off what might have been a grass-roots pro-choice movement, it signaled the beginning of a genuine mobilization on the other side of the issue. The pro-life movement, as it calls itself, was abetted by institutional forces that had little prior interest in abortion or, for that matter, in women. First there was the Catholic Church, which appears to have fastened on the abortion issue as a way of soothing those elements of the laity that had been offended by the reforms of Vatican II, represented by the English mass and nuns in mufti. Then, among Protestants, there was the evangelical revival of the 1970s and 1980s. To fundamentalists like Jerry Falwell, abortion neatly summarized the evils of a society corrupted by secular humanism and its partner in crime, liberal permissiveness. Falwell attributes his own decision to move into political activism to the fact that, in the 1970s, "Satan had mobilized his own forces to destroy America by negating the Judeo-Christian ethic, secularizing our society, and devaluating human life through the legalization of abortion and infanticide."

The third force shaping the anti-abortion movement was the secular New Right. In the 1980s abortion became the moral centerpiece of the New Right's program, weirdly offsetting the right's less merciful-sounding positions on social programs that might benefit actual babies. The New Right established its own national anti-abortion organization, featured the abortion issue at its annual "pro-family" conferences, and helped to build local anti-abortion organizing efforts. Phyllis Schlafly and Beverly LaHaye, the leading spokeswomen of the right, rallied women to the anti-abortion cause as part of their larger effort to "save the family," restore "traditional

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

values," and, of course, defend America from Communist aggression.

Thus, by the beginning of the 1980s, there appeared to be not one, but two women's movements on the American scene. There was the feminist movement, still soldiering away on the ERA and other measures designed to enhance women's economic independence, health, and general life chances; and there was what might be described roughly as an anti-feminist movement, based among anti-abortion activists and extending, in its concerns, to the larger "pro-family" agenda of the Christian right. Each claimed to represent women's best interests and blamed the other side for undermining those interests. To anti-abortion activists, feminists were (and, I suppose, still are) brittle, unfeminine careerists, scornful of family and motherhood. To feminists, "pro-life" women are either opportunistic quislings or pathetic dupes of the male right.

So far, the largest public clash between the two sides has been over the ERA, which drew lobbyists both pro and con in force to the legislatures of 17 states. But the legalization of abortion created a new and highly focused setting for confrontation: the hundreds of abortion clinics scattered throughout the United States, in shopping centers, office buildings, and residential neighborhoods. With the failure of the Human Life Amendment to the Constitution in the early 1980s, anti-abortionists turned their attention to the clinics. They picketed; they held prayer vigils; and, in hundreds of instances, they resorted to bombings and other acts of violence. Meanwhile pro-choice activists rallied to the clinics' defense with counterpickets and escort services for the hapless women trying to get through the fray.

In *Contested Lives*, Faye Ginsburg, an anthropologist, offers a sensitive and remarkably balanced study of the abortion conflict as it unfolded, between 1981 and 1986, in the heartland of Middle America. Fargo, North Dakota, the setting for her study, is a conservative, racially homogeneous city that prides itself on having the highest rate of church attendance of any standard metropolitan area in the United States. Like most parts of the country, the Fargo area was initially undisturbed by *Roe* v. *Wade*. Local doctors and hospitals simply refused to provide abortions (85 percent of the nation's counties lacked abortion services as of 1987), leaving Fargo women with a 300-mile drive to the nearest abortion service. Then, in 1981, at the instigation of local feminists, a freestanding abortion clinic opened in a quiet, residential neighborhood. The ensuing controversy made Fargo, according to ABC News, "The Community Ripped Apart by Abortion."

Ginsburg's most intriguing finding is that, at least in Fargo, the pro-choice and anti-abortion activists are not as different, in background or in philosophy, as most commentators seem to believe. No huge gap of class or life experience divides them. Both sides believe they are doing something to advance the cause of women, and to improve the world in general. And on both sides, women cloak their concerns in a rhetoric of "feminine values," particularly the value of nurturance, which they understand to be devalued by a (take your pick) male-dominated or godless society.

In fact, Ginsburg's book implicitly challenges the view that the two movements—pro-choice and anti-abortion, or feminist and anti-feminist—are simply ideological opposites, one arising in hostile reaction to the other. It leads us to suspect strongly that, at some level far deeper than the calculations of church or party, the two movements have common roots in anxieties widely shared by wom en in late-20th-century America.

The anti-abortion activists Ginsburg interviewed are not, in any clear-cut way, dupes of male religious and political leaders. One of them, in fact, was responsible for getting her evangelical church to take up the abortion issue in the first place. (I do think, however, that Ginsburg slights the importance of male leadership, of doctors as well as of men of the cloth, in legitimizing the grass-roots level of the anti-abortion movement.) Nor are Fargo's female anti-abortion activists the kind of multi-issue anti-feminists one might find in Schlafly's or LaHaye's outfits. Some of them express sympathy with other feminist goals, and were surprised, when the issue of abortion arose, to find themselves extruded from Fargo's feminist circles.

If there is a single animating perception among these anti-abortion activists, it is the sense that motherhood is a heroic achievement, carried out almost in defiance of the society's dominant values. They describe difficult pregnancies, painful births, frustrated years at home with small children. Marriage is "a lot of hard work," and nurturance (seen again as a quintessential female trait by both sides) is, to the "pro-lifers," not in-born, but achieved through prayer and personal struggle. To these women, motherhood is a beleaguered role, not only because women today are expected to enter the labor market, but because nurturance itself is devalued by the larger society. As one of Fargo's anti-abortion activists puts it, "... We've accepted abortion because we're a very materialistic society and there is less time for caring." In the anti-abortionists' accounts, abortion is one more assault on the already strenuous business of motherhood, which is, in turn, the last bastion of human tenderness in a cold and uncaring world.

The pro-choice activists in Fargo share many of the same values and perceptions. Most of the ones Ginsburg introduces us to are mothers, some are full-time homemakers, and all tend to see their pro-choice work as a nurturing activity—directed, in this case, toward other women. Ginsburg characterizes their particular outlook as "Midwestern feminism," but I would say that, outside of the factional hothouses of the big cities and university centers, this is simply what all of American grass-roots feminism looks like; it is neither separatist nor single-mindedly success-oriented, but firmly rooted in what both sides would take to be "feminine values."

The parallel is all the more striking if we return to the branch of the feminist movement that spawned the pro-choice movement in the first place: the women's health movement of the early 1970s. The

Redwing Blackbirds

This morning they came like the dying
reclaiming their old lives, delirious
with joy right on the seam of Spring,
streaming in by the tattered thousands
like black leaves blowing back onto the trees.

But the homeless know what's expected by now,
and when the farmer fired into their body,
they rose all around me like trembling
black wounds gaping red at the shoulders,
a river of pain draining into the sky.

Tonight, as I look at the cold sky
and its flock of blue-white scars,
I can't yet turn from Orion's red star
whose trembling red light has travelled for years
to die now into any eyes that will hold it.

Fred Dings

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

movement's goal, "control over our own bodies," was not so much an expression of militant individualism as of the sense that our bodies, and in particular our reproductive functions, were being menaced and invaded by impersonal, uncaring, outside forces. Some of our most prominent older activists—like Norma Swenson, one of the authors of the original *Our Bodies Ourselves*—had their start in the movement for "natural" childbirth in the 1950s. Others, including one of Fargo's pro-choice leaders, had been members of La Leche League, which is devoted to promoting breast-feeding. Far from seeing our biological condition, our capacity for motherhood, as a sink of "imminence" from which we had to escape, we saw it as something to take pride in, and to protect.

My own "conversion story" is illustrative. I had been involved in feminist projects earlier, but I did not become emotionally engaged until my first pregnancy, in 1970. The experience of prenatal care in a hospital clinic, followed by the standard brutality of a hospital birth, "changed my life," as the expression goes. I wasn't angry (as anti-abortionists might imagine) because I resented giving birth. On the contrary, I was angry (as they might well understand) because in the process of giving birth something intrinsically womanly had been violated and insulted. It was this anger, this sense of violation and loss of control, that propelled me into feminism, and—by no means incidentally—into pro-choice activism.

It is as if feminism has been fighting on two fronts. On the one hand, it has been moving ahead to claim new areas for female power and endeavor; on the other hand, it has been looking back to defend territory that seems to be slipping away. In the 19th century, the new area was the realm of public decision-making, symbolized by suffrage; the old territory included all the productive labor (spinning, food processing, and so on) that women had once performed in the home. Feminists saw immense promise in the industrial era, and they believed that machinery would eventually level the inequalities that arise from the male advantage in physical strength. At the same time, however, they shared with anti-suffragist women an anxiety that women would be left somehow functionless, parasitic, or adrift. Just as both sides used a rhetoric of "home values" and female moral superiority to advance their claims, both sides agreed on the need to upgrade and even "professionalize" the domestic functions that remained to them. From the vantage point of the late 20th century, the shared conservatism of the two sides—I mean the shared concern with *conserving* what had been or might be lost—is often more striking than their differences.

Second-wave feminism is, by reputation, more monolithically committed to "modernist" goals—to diminishing, rather than upgrading, domestic chores, and to getting out of the house altogether. But second-wave feminism has also been suffused with a sense of loss of function or control, especially in the realm of motherhood and reproduction. In part, I think, this has been a response to the extreme colonization of reproduction—by the medical profession and related enterprises—that was taking place at midcentury. On the eve of the feminist revival, in the 1950s and 1960s, women were supposed to be committed to reproduction as their life's work, but under conditions that could only be regarded as degrading. Childbirth had moved decisively into the hospital in the 1940s, where it was experienced (if that is the word) under total anesthesia and/or while bound to the delivery table in an ignominious posture. Breast-feeding was discouraged by the medical profession as a faintly disgusting atavism. Hysterectomies were performed as a means of birth control, or to relieve unrelated symptoms like backaches.

Many other factors contributed to the perceived devaluation of motherhood. There was, during the postwar years, a growing current of male cynicism about the entire enterprise, reflected in Phillip Wylie's best-selling attacks on "Momism" and in the early *Playboy* magazine's contempt for wives as "parasites." Perhaps most important was the decline, beginning roughly in the 1960s, of male willingness—and male ability—to provide the financial support for years of female childbearing and "nurturance." This trend contributed to the rise of female-headed households, the increasing rate of defaults on child support payments, and to the now well-known "feminization of poverty." For many in recent decades, motherhood has come to seem a valiant and often lonely option, more likely to lead to poverty than respect.

Feminism and anti-feminism represent two different strategies for dealing with these dislocations and the larger atmosphere of disrespect. The anti-feminist approach is to try to fortify the institution of marriage—in part through religious and "pro-family" ideology—and to hope that it will once again become a safe haven for full-time mothers and their children. In this endeavor, abortion is indeed a threat. For, if abortion is a "woman's choice," then it is harder to argue that the support of mothers and children is, or should be, a *male* responsibility.

Feminists would also like to see men become more responsible in such matters as child support, but they are not depending solely on marriage to provide the space and the support for motherhood. They want women to be able to earn enough to support a family, if necessary; and they want government and employers to help out with paid parental leave, flexible hours, child-care facilities, and so forth. In the feminist strategy, the abortion option is indispensable: as the responsibility for children devolves increasingly to women, so must the choice as to when to bear them.

Still, these strategic differences ought to leave some common ground for action—around the reform of medical practices, for example, or the campaign for parental leave. It is this hope that seems to motivate *Contested Lives*. In Fargo, at least, there was some basis for hope. There, pro-choice and anti-abortion activists are likely to know each other in other contexts, and even to have coffee together after appearing in public debates. In 1985, Ginsburg reports, women from both sides began to meet in a loosely structured group called "Pro-Dialogue," which identified a common goal in working "toward reducing, as much as possible, the need for abortion," and "fighting together to solve some of the problems women face."

But regretfully—my own regret is considerably sharpened by Ginsburg's excellent book—I do not see much hope for a more ongoing or widespread rapprochement between the two sides on the abortion issue. For one thing, the anti-abortion movement has become much less a *women's* movement than it was when Ginsburg broke off her field work in Fargo. The visible leadership of the movement has passed decisively to male evangelicals, like Operation Rescue's Randall Terry, who see their struggle as part of a larger effort to bring about a theocratic social order. The tactics, too, have changed. Although bombings and violence have declined, militant confrontations—aimed at shutting down the clinics and, apparently, at terrorizing their clientele—are now the order of the day. Prayer vigils are one thing, but it is hard to imagine the participants in recent clashes—which are arranged, these days, with military precision and directed by walkie-talkies—having much to say to each other over a cup of coffee.

Besides, even among women, the vague and cozy notion of "feminine values" may afford less common ground

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than Ginsburg seems, at times, to wish. As she points out, feminists (in Fargo and elsewhere) see nurturance as a principle to be extended beyond the bonds of mother and child, husband and wife, to "members of the community, people in the workplace, and even the nation as the whole." Feminists understand that nurturance is only trivialized by being sequestered in the home or assigned exclusively to women. The goal is to institutionalize and thus to extend the "kinder, gentler" impulse—through an expanded welfare state, for example, and a more accountable private economy. And it is this vision that links the feminist movement to the left or progressive end of things, and sends feminists out, not only to defend women's rights as narrowly construed, but to oppose militarism (seen as the antithesis of nurturing) and to fight for a more just and equal economic order.

Anti-feminists, on the other hand, including Fargo's anti-abortion activists, seem more concerned to shore up nurturance in the private sphere—within the family, or within that most private of all relationships, between a woman and the embryo she carries. And this emphasis on reforming the private and domestic sphere is at least consistent with the New Right's social vision, in which tenderness may flourish within each household (or, more narrowly, within each woman), while militarism and the more reckless forms of capitalism are free to rampage out of doors.

Still, something like Fargo's Pro-Dialogue might be worth a try. Where there is so much rhetoric about nurturance, about the value of each human life, about the dignity of each woman's choices, there ought to be some basis for seeing each other as human beings worth listening to. And if we are just beginning, after a postponement of two decades, a serious, mass, grass-roots, pro-choice movement, we will surely have to make the effort.

BARBARA EHRENREICH is the author of the forthcoming *Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class* (Pantheon).

The Art of Conversation

BY DAVID BROMWICH

The Voice of Liberal Learning: Michael Oakeshott on Education by Michael Oakeshott edited by Timothy Fuller

(Yale University Press, 169 pp., $20)

Call Michael Oakeshott a "conservative," as he himself has done, and right away things start getting complicated. He is hardly a conservative in the manner of William Buckley or George Will. Nor, in his habits of feeling, does he much resemble the overstimulated Mrs. Thatcher. He seems to cherish not a particle of the usual conservative faith that knowledge of the past can be transmitted as a whole. Such knowledge, he thinks, is never a means to an end, and it is not to be harnessed as a therapy to cure the many diseases of conduct in our time.

On the contrary, Oakeshott believes that the purpose of education is to allow an individual mind to interpret its own humanity in the world that it inherits. In this area, government policy, or the withdrawal of government funds and the substitution of government pamphlets, is simply an irrelevant annoyance. The aim is pursued anyway by scholars and not by institutions, and it is a matter of unsupervised trials and tests. Above all, it is a matter of patience and practice.

If one settles for calling Oakeshott a political theorist, again the description must be carefully qualified. From *Experience and its Modes* (1933) to *On History* (1983), he has written less as a theorist than as a teacher; and the theme of his teaching is not so much politics as the limits of politics. The problem with theorists, as Oakeshott sees it, is that they end up writing the prospective blueprint or the retrospective digest of a social order they only half understand. When such a plan is adopted in place of existing habits of conduct, it will always fail more or less painfully, in proportion as the plan is reduced to a practice more or less completely. At best, a theory may serve as the "abridgement" of an actual tradition—as a reminder, for those who come lightly equipped and late on the scene, of the complexity that a way of life can have only for those who inhabit it.

As Oakeshott observes in "Political Education" (an essay from *Rationalism in Politics* reprinted in his new book), the revolutionary republicanism of Saint-Just and Robespierre was just such a theory, with all the effects of a rapid and partial translation:

> On 4 August 1789, for the complex and bankrupt social and political system of France was substituted the Rights of Man. Reading this document we come to the conclusion that somebody has done some thinking. Here, displayed in a few sentences, is a political ideology: a system of rights and duties, a scheme of ends—justice, freedom, equality, security, property and the rest—ready and waiting to be put into practice for the first time. "For the first time?" Not a bit of it. This ideology no more existed in advance of political practice than a cookery book exists in advance of knowing how to cook. Certainly it was the product of somebody's reflection, but it was not the product of reflection in advance of political activity. For here, in fact, are disclosed, abstracted and abridged, the common law rights of Englishmen, the gift not of independent premeditation or divine munificence, but of centuries of day-to-day attending to the arrangements of an historic society.

Abridgement is one thing, the understanding of a tradition another. For understanding consists of "the pursuit of intimations," the tracing of connections to, and within, a never fully comprehensible order.

Along with "Political Education"—good to have again, since *Rationalism in Politics* has gone out of print—Oakeshott's new book contains five essays that have not before been collected. Four of them are major statements of educational practice. Taken together, they make a strong antidote to the pronouncements of William Bennett and Allan Bloom, *and* to all the replies to Bennett and Bloom that have emerged from the academic left. This is not because Oakeshott's essays offer a *via media*. It is rather because they recall the forgotten logic of liberal education itself.

Our present "crisis" in the humanities is sometimes blamed on John Dewey, sometimes on rock 'n' roll and the year 1968. But as anyone knows who has read the arguments, the real trouble is not the lack of plausible analysis, but the altogether predictable horizons of the analysts. We are offered a choice between empty projectors who work from shallow memories of the recent past and savers of civilization whose image of a distant past is just a blown-up

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

negative of the present.

Enter Oakeshott. It is putting the case mildly to say that in this company his sense of the good of a liberal education stands out as exceptional. His, I believe, is the correct position so far as the humanities are concerned. But it is a view that sets free inquiry, interpretation, and the study of history close together as elements of genuine learning; and there are scholars today, as there have been since the 17th century, who will want to challenge the rightness of that alignment. What seems beyond challenge is that this book is the first in the present controversy to raise the discussion above an exchange of official platitudes and dissenting pieties.

Most people who talk much about the past quickly find themselves talking about "tradition." Oakeshott seldom uses that word. He believes the survivals of the past can never be linked in a methodical way. Instead of "tradition," he speaks of an "inheritance." And this has interesting consequences for the way he presents the subjects of study in the humanities. Just where the average conservative would flourish a booklist (itself a sort of blueprint or digest), Oakeshott offers a non-exhaustive, open-ended catalog of qualities.

The achievements worth studying, he says, are composed of

> feelings, emotions, images, visions, thoughts, beliefs, ideas, understandings, intellectual and practical enterprises, languages, relationships, organizations, canons and maxims of conduct, procedures, rituals, skills, works of art, books, musical compositions, tools, artifacts, and utensils. . . . The components of this world are not abstractions ("physical objects") but beliefs. . . . And it is a world, not because it has itself any meaning (it has none), but because it is a whole of interlocking meanings which establish and interpret one another.

The final phrase suggests that Oakeshott is skeptical of such meanings as are sometimes thought to be inherent in events or records themselves—meanings that can be derived, for example, from the original intent of a framer of laws, or the declared aim of a leader of armies. As interpreters, we build up the shared beliefs that are binding for us, and we do so by participating in "a whole of interlocking meanings."

To come to know an inheritance is thus, to a large degree, an act of imagination. But it is an act that is involved at every point with our knowledge of ourselves. In this sense, human expressions, from however distant a time, "require to be understood." They require it, that is, if we are to become human; for "nobody is born a human being." Indeed, we differ from the animals chiefly in that each human generation shows some advance from the last, even if the advance in question is not necessarily an improvement.

As Oakeshott observes in "A Place of Learning":

> A man's culture is an historic contingency, but since it is all he has he would be foolish to ignore it because it is not composed of eternal verities. It is itself a contingent flow of intellectual and emotional adventures, a mixture of old and new where the new is often a backward swerve to pick up what has been temporarily forgotten.

The metaphor here may be a little misleading, for we have been told earlier in the same essay that a human life is "a predicament, not a journey." How, then, in so inconclusive a setting, can we hope to connect self-knowledge with the knowledge of something incomparably vaster and more shadowy?

We can do it, Oakeshott says, by resemblance and by analogy, on the sole supposition that is inevitable for an interpreter: that our knowledge and its object are joined in a common medium of beliefs. Even an individual life "is composed of performances, and each performance is a disclosure of a man's beliefs about himself and the world and an exploit in self-enactment. He is what he becomes; he has a history but no 'nature.' "

It will be plain already how far Oakeshott's intuitions depart from the run of traditional and anti-traditional designs for education. It may still be asked what an education in keeping with his intuitions would feel like for the novice or the veteran scholar. But Oakeshott has anticipated the question, and answers it with another metaphor—one that he cares for enough to come back to again and again:

> Perhaps we may think of [the components of a culture] as voices, each the expression of a distinct and conditional understanding of the world and a distinct idiom of human self-understanding, and of the culture itself as these voices joined, as such voices could only be joined, in a conversation—an endless unrehearsed intellectual adventure in which, in imagination, we enter into a variety of modes of understanding the world and ourselves and are not disconcerted by the differences or dismayed by the inconclusiveness of it all. And perhaps we may recognize liberal learning as, above all else, an education in imagination, an initiation into the art of this conversation in which we learn to recognize the voices.

Learning to sit still and listen, and learning to recognize the distinct voices, and learning to speak for oneself in a recognizable voice are skills inseparable in practice—which is why "transmission" (a word used elsewhere by Oakeshott only once) gives a much poorer idea of the activity.

All these voices, or idioms, or modes, we may translate loosely into academic disciplines: history, it would seem, is one; poetry, another; philosophy, perhaps, another. But that translation itself is just one more abridgement, which risks losing the human point of the conversation. To test the worth of Oakeshott's metaphor, let us look at it instead against the background of some metaphors he did not choose. What is a conversation not? It is not a race, a match, or a duel. And it is not a symphony, any more than it is a solo concert or a monologue (however captivated the audience). It is best thought of perhaps as a serious game that one can only stop playing at the cost of ceasing to be oneself. Schools alone do not create the game. But for a long time now, they have opened up the place in society where it has some chance of being played.

Oakeshott's metaphors, and the ideals of education that they express, have broad practical implications for the present debates concerning a proper curriculum for the humanities. Until now, those debates have followed a crude format. The educational conservative says that the study of the humanities is nothing but the study of civilization—by which is meant the West, whose progress from strength to strength must be recited like a lesson. We may call the holder of this position, for short, PC (Professor of Civilization). The educational radical instantly replies that the learning, the habits of appreciation, the very idealisms of the West, are all marred by a wish to suppress "the Other," so that colonial domination is in fact at the heart of the inheritance. We may call this respondent, for short, PO (Professor of Otherness).

PC and PO are, it will be noticed, exact facsimiles of each other. The one is governed by a superstitious reverence, the other by a superstitious loathing, for every element of life that permits some continuity between past and future. The educational programs that have emerged from both sides are correspondingly vulgar: from PC, the idea of a regulated set of "core" texts, to lay down the lines for answering the timeless, central, and unchanging questions of humanity; from PO, the idea of a free marketplace of ideologies, a continuous theoretical exposure to the claims of rival isms, for the sake of imparting tools to unmask any imaginable social practice. PC wants a complete break with the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

present. PO wants a complete break with the past. For the future, neither will place his confidence in anything but institutions.

Oakeshott's reply to all this is to remind us that without ourselves reading in the present, there can hardly be a living past to know, but that unless we engage in such study, we shall be cheated of the single most potent means both of self-definition and of self-criticism: the sense that an existing way of life can be judged from a perspective not wholly trapped in the present. Oakeshott does not rule out the study of ideologies any more than he accords them a privileged place in learning. He does point out that they can supply no critical knowledge that is not more intimately to be found in a course of persistent reading and listening. He asks us to remember anyway that all higher learning is conducted neither to support a social order nor to sponsor a revolution against it, but to incite fresh thinking in the students who are finding themselves as they find their way into the conversation.

The only part of this self-discovery that Oakeshott tends to underrate is the necessity of contest. Blake spoke for an emphatic and always justified mood of the student when he said of Sir Joshua Reynolds, a teacher he had learned from and needed to reject, "This man was hired to depress art." Still, if Oakeshott does not sufficiently allow for such antagonism in theory, his critical practice affords a good many telling examples of it.

Long stretches of *The Voice of Liberal Learning*, and one whole essay, "The Universities," have a polemical motive and a Tory style of attack. This can be a hazardous weapon, less apt to wound an adversary than to cut the hand that wields it; but Oakeshott, almost alone of living writers, uses it variously and with a well-calculated effect. In a powerful later essay called "A Place of Learning," his tone has sharpened to a controlled ferocity:

> The world in which many children now grow up is crowded, not necessarily with occupants and not at all with memorable experiences, but with happenings; it is a ceaseless flow of seductive trivialities which invoke neither reflection nor choice but instant participation. A child quickly becomes aware that he cannot too soon plunge into this flow, or immerse himself in it too quickly; to pause is to be swept with the chilling fear of never having lived at all. There is little chance that his perceptions, his emotions, his admirations, and his ready indignations might become learned responses or even be innocent fancies of his own; they come to him prefabricated, generalized and uniform.

The passage alludes to a pair of steady elements in Oakeshott's creed. First, habits, for him, are necessary and not just imposed features of human identity—the "learned response" must also become an authentic response, or identity will be reduced to a flow of sensations. And second, the proper climate for education is that of a pause rather than an endless and restless search.

This last condition for learning Oakeshott calls "the doctrine of the interim." The doctrine holds that a certain time given to regard the world from a place of possible detachment will not turn out to be lost time. But the belief that this is so can never be a wager, with the hope of attaining a visible result. The pause is a good *in itself*. And again: not because it offers "leisure" but because it allows a place for thought. A fallacy about thought, of course, is that it always leads at last to disengagement. Yet it does lead there, initially. In order to occur at all, it requires a sense of the distance between two things—say, my life today as a teacher in an American city, and the life of a man two centuries ago who made a speech in London concerning the affairs of India.

Distance in space and distance in time are equally prompters of thought. In the mood of imperial arrogance in the 19th century, it was space that was taken for granted. Now it is time. In a passing but profound remark, Oakeshott observes that "one may learn to read only by reading with care, and only from writings which stand well off from our immediate concerns: it is almost impossible to *learn* to read from contemporary writings." What counts, with Oakeshott, most heavily against the social sciences is their insertion of a leveling contemporary idiom in the discussion of every human achievement.

And yet the common errors in devising a function for the university cut across the distinction between humanists and scientists, as they cut across the distinction between radicals and conservatives. These errors often look like rational alternatives to the doctrine of the interim. Thus, one "activist" view asserts that the university should reflect the society outside; another, that it should seek to guide the society from within. The first is the more pervasive error, and is usually invoked by people who argue for the second.

In a suggestive passage, Oakeshott traces the lineage of "reflection" theories of the university as far back as the writings of Bacon, Comenius, and Milton. These educators, he thinks, all shared a suspicion that the learning of historical meanings was apt to be "socially divisive rather than integrative." They accordingly founded an ethic that "*substitutes* 'socialization' for education." The result in our own time has been an idea of learning as social adjustment or social reform by other means—the belief, in short, that "the apprenticeship of the newcomer to adult life should be initiation, not into the *grandeurs* of human understanding, but into the skills, activities, and enterprises which constitute the local world into which he is presently and actually born."

This picture of the student as preparing for "an assigned or self-chosen role in an association of *fonctionnaires*" may be attractive in part because it suggests a promise of efficiency. But the picture fails to show how commonly the two functions, reflection and guidance, come into conflict with each other. The same objection applies to the many current pleas for reflection *as* guidance. It is widely argued today that the range of a curriculum should replicate as nearly as possible the interests of the people in a society—those interests being deduced from a patronizing assumption of "true consciousness" of race, sex, and other accidents of birth. The result is reflection without guidance, and guidance without reflection. Oakeshott sums up the confusion:

> You may say, "Out there in the streets something new is in the making, which will shatter all the syllogisms and formulae of the schools; conform or get out of the way," or you may say, "Out there in the streets is chaos, please help me to distinguish the good from the bad"—but you cannot reasonably say both at once. . . . In the end, the only plausible argument in favor of choosing the present time for [a complete shift of educational goals] is the current political argument that, in a world so chaotic a small addition to the disorder will scarcely be noticed, and if things go wrong circumstances are waiting to take the blame.

This book may be read from start to finish as a protest against obeying the "circumstances" that lie waiting to take the blame.

The earliest of these essays dates from 1949, the latest from 1975, but there is surprisingly little change of emphasis in all that span of years, and surprisingly little need of it. Some of the passages I have quoted, which sound as if they were written in the late 1960s, are the work of 15 years before: their thoughtfulness makes a good case for the durability of "intimations." But, to return briefly to Oakeshott's sense of the discrete voices of learning, one may remain uncertain that they always are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

distinguishable from each other.

If one thinks of the recent works of scholarship that have mattered to many thinking persons—books like J. G. A. Pocock's *The Machiavellian Moment* or E. P. Thompson's *The Poverty of Theory*—it is not immediately clear in which of the available voices they speak. Nor is it clear how much this ought to matter. Pocock's book is a study in the history of ideas, and a moral appeal to a tradition of republican practice. Thompson's is a polemic, within Marxism, against the claims of structuralist science, but it is also a work of history. To adapt Oakeshott's own words, the voices themselves have a history, but they have no "nature." The voices, modes, and idioms of a given conversation may be taken as important educational accidents merely of a certain time and place.

Michael Oakeshott has features in common with other modern thinkers, but it is hard to draw up a genealogy that fits him convincingly. Something of the elusiveness, and of the sufficiency, which he ascribes to "experience," may be associated with the special sense that Wilhelm Dilthey gave to the word "*Erlebnis*." That would explain why his strictures on interpretation often sound like comments on Dilthey's aphorism "Life is understood by life." But when he discusses the good that an education may do, there is a tone that is uniquely his: unfinished, skeptical, hopeful of understanding. It is a combination of qualities he might have learned from different thinkers as well. Hume and Burke come to mind, but he says he has found better wisdom in Hobbes and Montaigne. It takes (at least) a pause to see how those two might fit the ends of a single mind. Like both of them, Oakeshott has the gift of exemplifying the virtues he inculcates. He never names those virtues explicitly; except once, in a list of the traits he found admirable in a certain teacher of gymnastics: "patience, accuracy, economy, elegance, and style."

DAVID BROMWICH's *A Choice of Inheritance* will be published this fall by Harvard University Press.

Yiddish Lessons

BY DAVID G. ROSKIES

From That Time and Place: A Memoir 1938-1947 by Lucy S. Dawidowicz

(Norton, 333 pp., $21.95)

This was the recommended itinerary for Jewish travelers who had only one day to spend in the Polish city of Vilna in the year 1939: (1) Ostra Brama Street, with its famous shrine to the Virgin Mary built into the gateway; (2) Marshal Pilsudski's mausoleum in the Christian cemetery at Rossa; (3) City Hall; (4) Broad Street, with its memorial plaques to the sculptor Mark Antokolski and the poet Adam Mickiewicz; (5) the historic Jewish Quarter, Synagogue Courtyard, and the Strashun Library; (6) the University; (7) Napoleon Square; (8) Castle Hill; (9) the Cathedral; (10) the old Jewish cemetery; (11) the YIVO Institute; and (12) the Ansky Ethnographic Museum. Optimally, said their Yiddish guidebook, four days were needed to take in all the major sites, to savor the city's diverse ethnic makeup of Jews, Poles, White Russians, Lithuanians, Karaites, and Tatars. The book's title proclaimed *1000 Years of Vilna*, and you couldn't squeeze a millennium into a day.

In any other time and place, Zalmen Szyk's lavishly illustrated and thoroughly professional guidebook would have been taken for granted. Poland, after all, had its Society for Land Study that promoted tourism and hiking. But those were the days of a semi-fascist state, and the Society severely limited Jewish membership, and relegated no status whatsoever to Jewish historical landmarks. The overcoming of the deep ethnic, religious, and political barriers required not a historical guide to the city, but a utopian vision of the future. Only in Szyk's dreambook could a Jew move effortlessly from one ethnic enclave to another, and smoothly across religious boundaries, to enjoy the incalculable treasures of Vilna, the Jerusalem of Lithuania.

Fifty years after her own extended visit to Vilna, Lucy Dawidowicz vividly recalls the enforced ghettoization of the Polish Jews on the eve of their final destruction. Even when armed with an American passport and a fellowship to study at Vilna's world-renowned Yiddish Scientific Institute (better known by its acronym, the YIVO), the 23-year-old Dawidowicz (née Schildkret) discovered a city divided between "rich and poor, right and left," "them and us." Though it was indeed possible, as Szyk's guide to the millennium implicitly argued, to negotiate the city entirely in Yiddish, the language could not compensate for the economic and political strangulation of the Jews. Yet Dawidowicz had come there believing that language and culture could emancipate the Jews from their third-class status, if not from history itself.

Vilna was the ideological capital of Yiddish, and the YIVO was its shrine. To appreciate the power of that utopian dream, one must remember that on the eve of the Second World War, more Jews (11 million) spoke Yiddish than had ever spoken a Jewish language before—or, it is safe to predict, will probably do so again. In the brave new worlds of America and the Soviet Union, Yiddish was harnessed to the great proletarian struggle, and so, presumably, the workers of the world had united behind it. Just a stone's throw from Vilna, in the Soviet city of Minsk, one could argue a court case in Yiddish, attend a university in Yiddish, become a commissar in Yiddish. Farther east, on the border of Manchuria, there was a Jewish Soviet Republic of Birobidjan, where Yiddish was the official language.

Vilna, then, was only one of many possible pilgrimage sites on the world map of Yiddish. Yet for someone of Dawidowicz's background, the choice of Vilna was almost preordained. A red diaper baby who precociously lost her faith in Stalin, the young Dawidowicz was trying to reclaim what little was left of American Yiddish culture once its radical politics had been stripped away. If she couldn't believe in the Yiddish revolutionary paradise, the only thing left was the dream of forging a new, Jewish-language culture on the foundations of the old. It was a similar dream that propelled her Zionist counterparts to Jerusalem. The YIVO was established in Vilna only a week before the Hebrew University was called into being on Mount Scopus: between March 24 and April 1, 1925, the battle lines were drawn between the two "Jerusalems," over which would attract the brightest and the best.

Vilna had already become the magnet for a new brand of Jewish intellectuals and political activists—despite the revolutionary upheaval of 1905-06, the German occupation of World War I, the fierce battles between the Red Army

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the Polish Legion, the rise of virulent anti-Semitism under the Polish Republic. The list of these "naturalized" Vilna Jews reads like a Who's Who of the modern Yiddish intelligentsia: the pedagogue Abraham Golomb; the publisher Boris Kletskin; the poets Moyshe Kulbak and Abraham Sutzkever; the playwright A. Vayter; the Bundist leaders Arkady Kramer, Anna Rosental, and Boruch Virgili-Cahan; the Territorialist leader Yosef Chernikhov; the literary critics Naftoli Vaynig and Shmuel Niger; the scholars Max Erik, Zelig Kalmanovich, Zalmen Reisen, and Max Weinreich.

The secular Jewish elite, in turn, threw its enormous energy into creating a cradle-to-grave network of Yiddish institutions—everything from a sanatarium for tubercular patients to a Yiddish marionette theater; from hiking to (naturally) Esperanto clubs. Vilna could also boast the youngest and most diverse group of Yiddish poets anywhere in the world. The scope of "Young Vilna," as it was called, ranged from Chaim Grade's epic struggle with the ascetic world of Talmudic learning to Abraham Sutzkever's exuberant embrace of Nature in all her thousand colors.

But from its spotless new quarters in the fancy part of town, it was the YIVO that towered above all these modern institutions, because it alone laid claim to the entire east European Jewish experience: past, present, and especially future. To guarantee that future, it sponsored an *aspirantur*, or research fellowship program, for the training of young scholars. And so Dawidowicz's arrival in the summer of 1938 to join the other 15 *aspirantn* was not nearly as anomalous at it might seem in retrospect, even if her timing was perilously off.

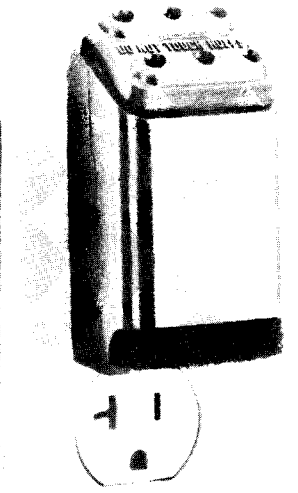
Besides the rise of fascism outside of Poland's borders and within, Vilna's Yiddishist utopia had already been disrupted by death, defections to the east, and immigration westward. All thoughts of Dawidowicz extending her own stay for another term were cut short by a letter from the American Embassy in Warsaw warning her to get out of Poland as soon as possible. A week after Dawidowicz left Vilna, the Germans invaded.

Would Yiddishism and other forms of diaspora nationalism have flourished were it not for the Holocaust? To that inevitable question, Dawidowicz delivers this resounding verdict: "Everything I loved in Vilna rested upon a rotten crumbling foundation." Any successes in forging an autonomous Yiddish secular culture she attributes not to internal Jew-

Clean up your space, make it pleasant and healthful, with...

Rodellex™ Plug-in Ionizer only $34.95*

But read this ad for an even better deal!



At home or at the office, human activity and crowded conditions make it almost inevitable that the air we breathe is dirty, stuffy, full of stale smoke, cooking odors, pollens and pollutants. It's unpleasant, debilitating, and detrimental to your health. You can end all that with the *Rodellex™ Ionizer.* Plug the unit into any 110 volt outlet. Within seconds, the Ionizer will generate millions and millions of negative ions. These ions work like little "magnets." They attract and neutralize minute smoke, dust, dirt, odor and pollen particles. You won't have to breathe them any more. They get trapped inside the unit and restore the air to healthy freshness.

We are one of the largest distributors of the *Rodellex™ Ionizer* in the United States and we can bring you this unique and helpful product for just $34.95. But we have an even better deal: ***Buy two for $69.90 and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** Feel better, breathe easier, and enjoy a more pleasant and healthful environment. Clean up your space and get the *Rodellex™ Ionizer* today!

• *Pollutants in the air get trapped on the filter inside the Rodellex™ Ionizer. For best results, rinse out the filter every month or so. U.L. listed.*

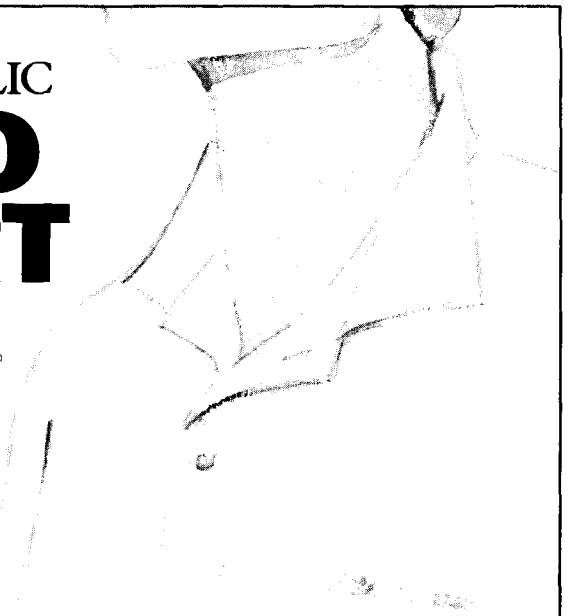
FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 621-1203
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Please give order **#2105 E983.** If you prefer, mail check or card authorization and expiration. We need daytime phone for all orders and issuing bank for charge orders. UPS/insurance: $4.95 for one *Rodellex™ Ionizer,* $6.95 for three. Add sales tax for CA delivery. You have 30-day return and one-year warranty.

For quantity orders (100+), call Ernest Ferard, our Wholesale/Premium Manager at (415) 543-6570 or write him at the address below.

since 1967
haverhills
131 Townsend Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

THE NEW REPUBLIC
POLO SHIRT



The New Republic is proud to present the ultimate fashion statement: The New Republic polo shirt. Fashioned out of 100% cotton and custom embroidered with our attractive new logo, The New Republic polo will become the staple of your casual wardrobe. It also makes the perfect gift for TNR aficionados on your shopping list. The New Republic polo is available in crisp white with the logo embroidered in navy blue, in adult sizes, small, medium, large and extra large. Only $24.50 per shirt plus $1.25 per shirt for shipping. Satisfaction guaranteed! Order yours today.

To: THE NEW REPUBLIC POLO SHIRT OFFER, 1220 19th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036

Please send me _____ polo shirt(s) in size(s) _____.

I have enclosed a check/money order in the amount of _____ to cover the cost of the shirt ($24.50 each) plus shipping ($1.25 each) plus applicable sales tax (D.C. Residents add 6%.) My address is:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ish resources and traditions, but rather to the total exclusion of Jews from the social, political, and cultural life of Poland. Harsh judgments are the stuff of this memoir.

They have as much to do with Dawidowicz's historical revisionism as with her undying love for two members of Vilna's Yiddish elite. For as bad as her timing was geopolitically, it was perfect personally. Just a few weeks after her arrival, Sholem Kalmanovich, the only son of Riva and Zelig Kalmanovich, left for Palestine; and so the Kalmanoviches became her surrogate parents and her spiritual mentors. Her book is not only a sober reappraisal governed by "the discipline of history," it is also a personal odyssey in which one family stands in for the fate of an entire civilization. Whether these two purposes can be reconciled is another matter.

The "discipline of history" invoked in the book's preface fuels the narrative with a good deal of animus. Part I, which recapitulates her year taking in the Christian sights and Jewish dreams of Vilna, seems to be aimed at the Evenhanded School of Polish History. To those (like Norman Davies) who argue that Polish anti-Semitism must be seen against the perennial victimization of the Poles themselves, Dawidowicz counters with an insider's view of "living from day to day" in the face of economic boycotts, religious fanaticism, and political disfranchisement. From Dawidowicz's perspective, the main expression of Poland's genius was the almost inexhaustible array of discriminatory policies it levied against the Jews and other hated minorities.

Since the facts she adduces are fairly well known (certainly to those who have seen the six-part PBS special on Poland), perspective is all. Among the Jews of Vilna, indeed among the senior faculty at the YIVO itself, opinions were deeply divided. Max Weinreich, the YIVO's guiding light, believed that self-knowledge was the key to redemption. Upon his return in 1934 from Princeton, where he had been working on a Rockefeller Foundation grant, Weinreich organized an autobiography contest among young Polish Jews, in order to study the effects of prolonged discrimination and deprivation on personality development; the most advanced methods of social psychology, he promised in the resulting study, would pave *The Road to Our Youth*. Zelig Kalmanovich, on the other hand, was busy writing jeremiads on the fate of diaspora Jewry, when he wasn't otherwise occupied editing the YIVO's scholarly journal. Here, as elsewhere in her memoir, Dawidowicz sides with Kalmanovich.

Putting to rest any residual romanticism on the Polish and Polish-Jewish side of things, Dawidowicz then tackles the far more ambiguous question of America's role in World War II. In the next part of her book, which takes the reader through the nightmare years of the Holocaust, she is out to demolish the Mea Culpa School of American History. To those who claim that America, and particularly its Jews, could have and should have done more to save the Jews of Europe, Dawidowicz reminds them of how slow the news was in arriving, how difficult it was for most people to believe, and how few practical alternatives were actually available. She cites a petition to Roosevelt drafted in March 1943 by Weinreich and signed by 283 of America's leading professors and then comments upon it as follows:

> For all of his intellectual brilliance, Weinreich was just as helpless as the rest of us when it came to practical suggestions on how to save the Jews. He could only propose "hitherto unused methods," hoping that Roosevelt's advisers would know how to implement his suggestion.

The weight of this anecdotal evidence is hardly overwhelming. Dawidowicz's assurance that the United States did all it could do for Europe's doomed Jews remains unproved by her book. Anyway, the matter is rather irrelevant to her memoir. What does stand out, more appropriately, and in memorable detail, is the way in which these hard-nosed Yiddish secularists, spared from the gas chambers by an accident of history, turn more and more to traditional forms of mourning in order to work through their collective grief. When all is said and done, they, too, stand up to recite the Kaddish.

Finally, Dawidowicz rebuts the Sentimental School of Holocaust History, the obsessive commemorators for whom the survivors are all seers and saints. Upon her return to Europe to work for the Joint Distribution Committee, she anticipates a fateful encounter with the few survivors from Vilna, but she discovers, instead, that the memories of Vilna cannot bridge the slaughter. The dead are unredeemable, and the living are a motley of heroes and collaborators, cynics and sycophants.

All these schools of historical thought and feeling are no doubt in need of policing, and in her other writings Dawidowicz has done a great deal to redress the wrongs of postwar memory. I wonder, though, whether a personal memoir is really the place to drive the nails into the coffin. In order to make these sweeping generalizations, Dawidowicz must devote an awful lot of space to factual exposition and historical data. There are surely more effective ways of incorporating history into the story of one's own experience, even without adopting the extravagant techniques of fiction. In the end, Dawidowicz's book pays a price: the historicization of her personal narrative, besides being a bit patronizing, takes the place of personal portrayal and psychological depth. The one exception is the chapter titled "Death Watch," about how she and the YIVO staff in New York tried to learn the fate of Vilna Jews through the pages of the free press: here every news item carries fateful, heartbreaking weight.

At its best, *From That Time and Place* is a true memoir: an idiosyncratic account of a single life, albeit a life dwarfed by its historical backdrop. Dawidowicz's admirable refusal to fake what she did not experience lends a fine note of subjectivity to her guided tour of a world that no longer exists. It is surely no accident, for instance, that the two most positive male figures in the Vilna part of the book combined worldliness with a profound knowledge of Jewish tradition. Of the YIVO's two intellectual giants, she clearly preferred Kalmanovich to Weinreich, and of Vilna's Yiddish modernist poets, she ranked Chaim Grade, fresh from the world of the Lithuanian yeshiva, high above the aesthete Abraham Sutzkever. These choices reveal much about the author's own proclivities. If unalloyed modernity was what she was after, she could have stayed in New York and hung out with Jacob Glatstein and Mikhl Licht at the Café Royale. But for a modern Yiddish culture distilled out of the folk, its poverty, and its accumulated wisdom, there was no better laboratory than Vilna.

A book that bills itself as a memoir invites a certain kind of reading. Because Dawidowicz tells us so little about her personal and family life, we find ourselves looking for the missing links. It is easy enough to guess why the warmth and the wisdom of the Kalmanoviches would render her own parents—her distant father, her overprotective mother—superfluous. But it is much harder to imagine precisely how her involvement with the fate of the Jews could come between her and her wartime, American-born sweetheart (she had returned, after all, disabused of Vilna's utopian dreams); or why, really, she chose to marry a refugee instead. I share Dawidowicz's dislike for the "true confession," but her portrait of Jewish Vilna might have taken on more flesh if her palette had more color.

Given the central role that Zelig Kalmanovich plays in this narrative, for in-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stance, it might have been helpful to know something about the prescient and extremely controversial articles that he was writing at precisely the time of her sojourn in Vilna. In fact, Kalmanovich's analysis of how Western capitalism and Soviet-style assimilation had already done irreparable harm to a sense of Jewish cohesiveness is, in its outlines, very close to Dawidowicz's own view. And given the role that religious symbolism and historical archetypes play in the later parts of her story—she seems to feel, though she does not say so, that a catastrophe of such magnitude can only be mediated through an appeal to the sacred—it would have been relevant to mention that Kalmanovich became an observant Jew in the ghetto, that he kept his ghetto diary in Hebrew rather than Yiddish.

One episode that Dawidowicz does recount, however, in her tight-lipped and aggressively unsentimental way, has to do with the Kalmanoviches' response to the news of imminent war. Gushing with love for her adoptive parents, full of late adolescent bravado, the narrator swears that she will stay in Vilna, come what may. To this Riva Kalmanovich replies, in the book's most memorable passage:

> What do you know of war? You can't begin to imagine what it'll be like. You won't be a help to us. You'll only be a burden, another mouth to feed, another person to care for. Go home to New York. Thank God you have time to go.

This dramatically reconstructed speech is the decree of the narrator's banishment from Eden, her coming of age as a woman and a Jew. Henceforth, her life will be a series of incremental losses, culminating in the loss of Eastern European Jewry itself. Like the rest of us, whether we abide by the "discipline of history" or not, Dawidowicz apprehends the meaning of her "place and time" not through newspaper reports or grand historiographic designs, but through the selfless love of another human being.

What the reader of Lucy Dawidowicz's memoir learns, then, is that the world of Eastern European Jewry was lost several times over. No secular scheme, no matter how grandiose, could restore the unity and the vigor that these Jews had once enjoyed when they were still obedient to God and his Torah. No amount of idealism and self-sacrifice could restore Vilna to its cultural pre-eminence, for the forces relentlessly pitted against it were too great. No amount of love or literary talent could restore to life the people who once channeled and challenged this young woman's faith. And no guidebook, however precise, could bridge the great gulf between the present and the past.

DAVID G. ROSKIES is the author most recently of *The Literature of Destruction: Jewish Responses to Catastrophe* (Jewish Publication Society).

A Tale of Two Nations

BY GEOFFREY WHEATCROFT

Modern Ireland 1600-1972 by R. F. Foster

(Viking, 752 pp., $35)

When does modern Irish history begin? Like most countries, Ireland was formed by human conflict, by migration, by trade, by conquest. Lying on the very edge of Europe meant that Ireland was left alone for longer than most countries; but it has also meant that Ireland has usually been the victim, the passive partner, acted on from outside, done to rather than doing. The first to do it were the Gaels, or Celts, who settled in Ireland not long before the birth of Christ, whereafter the previous, autochthonous inhabitants vanished. Gaelic Ireland was scarcely part of the Roman imperium, but became very much part of Christendom. In fact, it was one of Christianity's hiding places through the Dark Ages, themselves part of 1,000 long years when the rest of the world (with one exception) ignored Ireland. The exception was the Vikings, who besides their usual pastimes of rape and pillage founded the cities of Ireland, which are to this day almost all riparian: Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Galway.

Gaelic Ireland played a vital part as keeper of the religious and cultural flame, but it scarcely impinged on Europe economically or politically. Although Celtic civilization was in full and beautiful flower, Ireland developed nothing like the incipient nation-states seen in the rest of Europe. In fact, one of the most attractive things about Gaelic Ireland was that far from being a politically united country, it seems scarcely to have known the concept of state. Yet it was anything but strictly isolated throughout the first 1,000 years A.D., which saw continual traffic between Ireland and what were to become England and Scotland. Scotland took its very name from an Irish tribe, the Scoti, who settled in northern Britain from Ireland in the sixth century.

That process was reversed in 1169. Just over a hundred years after the Norman conquest of England, a group of Norman adventurers landed at Wexford, led by Strongbow, who soon after cemented his links with his new country by marrying a Gaelic chieftain's daughter, when there began the 800-year-old agonized, complex, cruel interaction between England and Ireland. Others followed Strongbow, not in large numbers, but numerous enough to create a new Anglo-Norman upper class. Fitzgeralds and Butlers and others predominated in the Pale around Dublin, and to some extent throughout the east and south of the country. They were soon Hibernicized, and overlapped and interbred with the old Gaelic upper class, but the (Gaelic) "Old Irish" and the (Norman) "Old English" remained distinct. The English crown made no serious attempt to subdue Ireland or to incorporate it politically; its writ ran, if at all, in only part of the country. Of all of Ireland, the most remote, the most isolated, and the most fully Gaelic, was Ulster.

Foster might have chosen 1169 or 1541 (when Henry VIII declared himself king rather than merely "lord" of Ireland, signifying as Foster says "a commitment to effective and total rule") as the starting point for his perceptive and detailed survey, which sets political developments against a dense background of social and economic history. (Sometimes it is almost too dense: you will need to keep in mind the difference between ranchers, dry cattle graziers, and strong farmers.) Instead, he chooses 1600 and Mountjoy's appointment by Queen Elizabeth as Lord Deputy of Ireland. The following year the rebel Irish and their Spanish allies were defeated at Kinsale, rounding off the bitter Elizabethan wars of conquest. A year later Mountjoy ceremoniously and symbolically smashed the ancient coronation stone of the O'Neills at Tullahogue. In 1607 O'Neill and O'Donnell left Ireland for the Continent—the "flight of the Earls" (of Tyrone and Tyrconnell), which inaugurated, just as symbolically,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Irish tradition of defeat, emigration, and exile.

Despite those defeats, Ireland was not yet subjugated and transformed; two more wars were required for that. In the Irish parliament of 1613-15 there were members who spoke no English, and in the 1620s two out of three justices of the peace in Limerick were still Roman Catholic. The Reformation had not taken in Ireland, not among the mass of the people, or among the Gaelic gentry; and as Foster says, the crucial fact defining Ireland at the beginning of the 17th century was the adherence of the Old English to Rome. To change the character of Ireland, large immigration was needed from England, and especially from Scotland, to Ulster. That process accelerated after the English civil war, Cromwell's murderous campaign of 1649-50, and the wholesale expropriation that followed and culminated in the Stuart ancien régime's final defeat on the Boyne in 1690. Foster emphasizes that William of Orange's Irish conquest had everything to do with his European strategic and political ambitions, and nothing to do with Ireland itself.

That was small consolation for the Irish as the 18th century began, a century of martyrdom for Ireland—and the century over which the Irish Kulturkampf is, in a sense, still fought. The Protestant Ascendancy entrenched itself with the full weight of law, a veritable system of apartheid. It became almost impossible for Catholics to own land. In 1703, 14 percent of land was owned by Catholics; by 1750, five percent. Like other master races or classes ruling a serf society, from Periclean Athens to 19th-century Russia, this ascendency had some achievements to its credit, though some of its later admirers exaggerated them—Yeats in particular, with his invocation of Swift and Berkeley and Goldsmith and other representatives of the "Irish mind." About this Foster is suitably ironic.

Foster quotes Louis MacNeice, another and more truly "Anglo-Irish" poet, on his 18th-century forebears, crediting them with "nothing but an insidious bonhomie, an obsolete bravado, and a way with a horse." He also quotes Fitzgibbon, Lord Clare, who punctured the Augustans' pretensions. In the 1780s "Grattan's parliament" in Dublin struck attitudes of independence against London, inspired by the American example: "We are in watercolor what they are in fresco." But as with those American revolutionaries—with their "yelps of liberty from the drivers of negroes," in Samuel Johnson's words—the position of Henry Grattan and Henry Flood and their fellow "Irish" gentlemen was equivocal. Fitzgibbon reminded them that the English crown at which they shook their fists was the only security for their property, for "the Act by which most of us hold our estates was an Act of violence—an Act subverting the first principles of the Common Law of England and Ireland. I speak of the Act of Settlement."

These Irish patriots, as they saw themselves, were mostly interlopers whose forebears had arrived after Cromwell. As landowners they were a minority within the Protestant minority. Many poorer Protestants chafed under oligarchic rule and left the country. There was a large-scale 18th-century migration to America of Ulstermen—Scotch-Irish, as old-fashioned Americans still sometimes say—with the curious and now barely discernible result that there are more Americans of Irish Protestant than of Irish Catholic descent.

The ironies cut two ways. In 1798 rebellion broke out in Ireland, an uprising to which Irish republicans still hark back, not least if they are of theoretical class-warlike bent. "Ninety-eight" saw Catholic and Protestant Irishmen united against the English oppressors, did it not? Well, only up to a (rather tenuous) point. Foster shows that 1798 was, in essence, a geographically localized peasant jacquerie, a howl of rage. There were Protestant rebels in Ulster, for a time at least, but even there and then Protestant rebelliousness was in inverse proportion to the size of the Catholic population in the country; the more Catholics, the more loyal to the authorities the Protestants were. And although heroes and martyrs of 1798 are invoked and commemorated (as by the memorial to Wolf Tone in Stephen's Green, a collection of stone-slabs; "Tonehenge" to the Dubliners), it is odd that pious Catholic republicans revere the name of Tone, a Protestant by birth and a free-thinker by conviction, who would, one suspects, look askance at the reality of the present-day Irish state.

An answer to 1798—a response, if not a solution—came with the Union of 1801, the turning point of Foster's book. He might have taken as his text something the late F. S. L. Lyons said: while to Unionists the Union of the two crowns and parliaments was a noble experiment and a tragic failure, and to Nationalists it was a deed of oppression, to the dispassionate historian it was the essential condition that made possible the creation of the modern Irish state. What *is* clear is that the Union did not work as it was meant to.

To understand Ireland since the early 19th century, two observations about its distinctive nationalism are crucial, one Oliver MacDonagh's, the other Conor Cruise O'Brien's. A 19th-century plebeian Catholic nationalism succeeded 18th-century Protestant nationalism and inherited from it certain tenets—the geographical indivisibility and the cultural homogeneity of Ireland—that made sense in the terms of the Protestant landowning "patriots," and only in those terms. There are comparisons with the "nationalism" of other ruling races, such as the Hungarian gentry, who thought of the land they ruled as Hungary whether their peasants were Slovak or Romanian. To a hunting Anglican landlord, the country where he lived was Ireland, whether in Co. Antrim, where those who tilled the land where Presbyterians, or Co. Cork, where they were Catholics.

And unlike all those other countries that experienced movements of national revival at the same time, political nationalism preceded cultural nationalism in Ireland. So it was that the Young Ireland group of the 1840s could not define themselves in terms of language, which was why their contemporary Mazzini, Italy's nationalist patriot, could not take them seriously as a national movement. In fact, Irish nationalism had to define itself in religious terms until the end of the 19th century, when a more serious attempt to revive the Irish language and culture began.

If Union was the turning point, almost as formative were the Famine of the 1840s (which led to emigration, "the great fact of Irish social history from the early 19th century": three million of a population of a little more than eight million emigrated in the 25 years after the Famine) and the rise of Parnell's Home Rule party in the 1880s, which won most of the parliamentary seats in Ireland and held the balance in the House of Commons at Westminster. But Ireland as it is today came into being during the years 1912-22. The growth of the Protestant population in Ulster in the 18th and 19th centuries presented an insoluble complication, or a complication soluble in the end only by partition; and even the defenders of partition call it not a good answer, but the least bad one.

Belfast became the one great industrial city in Ireland. Its population grew from 75,000 in 1841 to 387,000 in 1911. The compromise of 1921, which partitioned Ireland into 26-county Free State and six-county Northern Ireland, was a product of weariness: the British were worn out by the terrible 1914-18 war. It was also influenced (though maybe unconsciously) by the breakup or partition of other European countries following the war, notably Hungary. Most British

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

politicians, as Foster says, "were reluctant to admit that Partition might be more than temporary," but often it is only the provisional that lasts. No one wanted permanent Partition, and it was anything but the "crime against Ireland" of republican rhetoric, which implied malice aforethought. It happened, ineluctably.

Only the least bad answer: nobody today can look at Ireland, at the whole island, with much satisfaction. Partition may be flawed, but here is a last irony that emerges from Foster's final three chapters. The six-county province or statelet of Northern Ireland in the half-century of semi-autonomous rule from Stormont, the grandiose building outside Belfast, was in effect a Unionist one-party state. Foster concludes his history in 1972, with the suspension of Stormont by the British government and direct rule from London, as well as with the entry of the Irish Republic into the European Economic Community. What happened in Ulster during those 50 years is a disgraceful and depressing story.

The wrong lesson is easily drawn. Partition was, and is, an authentic expression of self-determination on the part of a million Ulster Protestants. But that hardly justified the grotesquely overgoverned Province, whose creation exposed the Ulster Catholics "to the most unbending and to them repugnant rule of the extreme Ulster Party," just as had been foreseen in those words 100 years ago by an intelligent Unionist. Not only narrow bigotry distinguished the Ulster Unionists in the years they ruled Northern Ireland, but simple, hopeless inadequacy. In 1934 Sir Richard Dawson Bates, the Northern Ireland minister for home affairs, announced that he would not use the telephone for important business, having learned "with a great deal of surprise that a Roman Catholic telephonist has been appointed to Stormont." And I had forgotten the story of Craigavon, the Stormont prime minister, meeting the Australian prime minister Joseph Lyons and warning him to watch the Australian Catholics: "they breed like bloody rabbits," not even bothering to ask himself whether Lyons might be a Roman Catholic, as he was.

It is easy to see the failures of Northern Ireland. Less obvious, though more interesting, are the complications of the Irish Republic. Its experience since 1922 has really been remarkable. Under what Foster calls the De Valera Dispensation, Ireland tried to cut itself off from the 20th century, to become an independent country (independent of the wartime allies and of NATO), turned in on itself, Catholic, Gaelic, self-sufficient. This both worked and did not. Nationalists railed against Partition, but, as Foster says, the distinctively "Irish Catholic" character of the Irish Free State (Republic from 1949) could not have developed as it did if the state had included a million Ulster Protestants.

The attitude to Northern Ireland of irredentist patriots in the South was contradictory. A pretense was made that Orange Ulster was a lost sister to be welcomed back, but politicians sometimes revealingly slipped into another rhetoric. In 1921 De Valera advocated coercion of the Ulster Protestants, whose position was "an accident arising out of the British connection, [which] will disappear with it." In 1966, 45 years later, De Valera spoke on the anniversary of the Easter Rising and spoke of Ulster as "the land of the O'Neills, the O'Cathains, the MacDonnells, the Maguires, and the MacGuinnesses," which is true in the sense that the United States is the land of Pocahontas and Geronimo. De Valera did not follow his own logic and propose the mass expulsion of the Protestants, though others did.

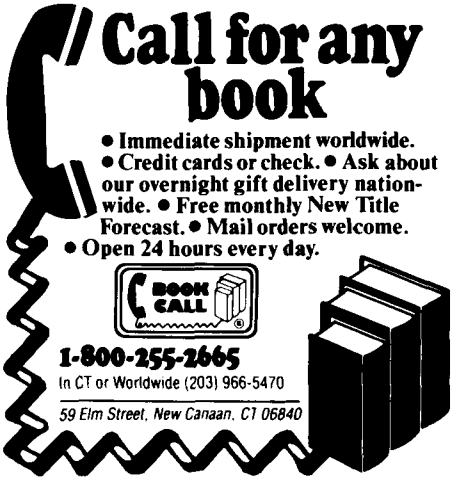
Even without such rhetoric, Ulster looked askance at the new state. I have spoken of an Irish Kulturkampf, fought over the history of the 18th century: on one side were Yeats and those like him, with their somewhat excessive reverence for and identification with Georgian Anglo-Ireland; on the other was Daniel Corkery. His influential book *The Hidden Ireland*, which appeared in 1924, spoke of the true, Gaelic Ireland hidden under the mask of Anglicized Ireland with its contemptible epigoni like Yeats and Synge. To rediscover that hidden Ireland became the official policy of the new state, with academic fuglemen like Timothy Corcoran to the fore:

> The Irish nation is the Gaelic nation; its language and literature is the Gaelic language; its history is the history of the Gael. All other elements have no place in Irish national life, literature and tradition. . . . The poetry and life of what Aodh de Blacam calls Belfast can only be Irish by being assimilated by Gaelic literature into Gaelic literature.

This was matched by Tomas Derreig, the minister of education, who declared in 1943 the need to wage "a most intense war against English, and against human nature itself, for the life of the language."

Utterances like these, says Foster, gave Ulster Unionists every excuse for paranoia. Still another excuse might have been the theocratic nature of the Irish state, with the "special position" of the Catholic Church, its bans on contraception and divorce, its rigid censorship, and the way the Catholic hierarchy could and did veto welfare legislation. Observant Ulstermen would have noticed that the Protestant population of the 26 counties dropped from more than ten percent at the time of Partition to a little more than seven percent ten years later to little more than three percent today. This was partly a result of emigration, and even more of intermarriage.

But if "modern" Ireland has enhanced its Catholic character, what of its Gaelic character? At the time the Free State


Call for any book
• Immediate shipment worldwide.
• Credit cards or check. • Ask about our overnight gift delivery nationwide. • Free monthly New Title Forecast. • Mail orders welcome.
• Open 24 hours every day.
BOOK CALL
1-800-255-2665
In CT or Worldwide (203) 966-5470
59 Elm Street, New Canaan, CT 06840

Hemisphere

A MAGAZINE OF LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN AFFAIRS

Provoking debate on the region's problems, initiatives and achievements. . .

Providing an intellectual bridge between the concerned publics of North America, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Combining timeliness and depth, ***Hemisphere*** presents. . .

FEATURE ARTICLES
Frontline reports and essays by opinionmakers from the Americas and the world.

FAXFILE
Insider briefs on people and institutions shaping Latin American and Caribbean affairs.

EDITORIALS
Incisive commentary on regional developments.

BOOK REVIEWS
Critiques of provocative new books on Latin America and the Caribbean, ranging from politics and economics to literature and cinema.

PUBLICATIONS UPDATE
A guide to the most recent books, periodicals and documents on the region.

Subscribe now! And get a year (3 issues) of ***Hemisphere.***
$14 US, PR, USVI, Canada $22 Elsewhere
Please make check or money order payable to:
Hemisphere, Latin American and Caribbean Center, Florida International University, Miami, Florida 33199

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

came into being, fewer than one in five of its inhabitants spoke Irish at all, let alone regularly, the result of a steady atrophy since the 17th century, encouraged by progressive Irish nationalists up to and including Daniel O'Connell. The attempt to revive Gaelic was a heroic enterprise. It was unlikely that it would succeed, but it was not impossible. After all, a century ago nobody spoke Hebrew, but it has been revived as the everyday language of three million people by a collective act of will. In the case of Ireland, it did not succeed. "Human nature itself" prevailed, and today fewer people than ever speak the ancient and beautiful language as a first tongue. The outcome of that struggle is poignant. It scarcely matters which was superior: today the two nourishing cultural traditions, Gaelic and Anglo-Irish, are both on the point of extinction. Romantic Ireland is dead and gone and modern Ireland is here. But is it really Ireland?

GEOFFREY WHEATCROFT is a columnist in London and the author of *The Randlords: The Exploits and Exploitations of South Africa's Mining Magnets* (Atheneum).

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 6*

by an analysis of his administration's endless corruption scandals. Nevertheless, none of his substantive objections withstands scrutiny.

Koch claims he never called Esposito a "gangster." Jack Newfield remembers the 1974 comment well and mentions it in a book he co-authored, *City For Sale*.

Esposito would be surprised to learn that Koch's appointment of the now convicted felon Ameruso as transportation commissioner did not pay off a political debt. The Brooklyn boss boasted in 1979: "[Koch] promised me he would promote Tony and he did. He told that bullshit screening committee to fuck off when they tried to say Tony wasn't qualified. I admire that kind of balls. I told Koch that Tony is my guy, and he showed respect for my judgment . . ." (*City For Sale*)

Koch defies me to name "hacks" he has appointed; well, the list is long (three city agencies have been branded racketeering enterprises by juries). A few of the more notorious: Alex Liberman, an Esposito crony, was Koch's director of leasing who was convicted of racketeering and extortion; Jay Turoff, another Esposito protégé, was Koch's taxi & limousine commissioner who has now been convicted of fraud and conspiracy charges; and Geoffrey Lindenauer, a former quack sex therapist close to Queens boss Donald Manes, pleaded guilty to turning Koch's Parking Violations Bureau into a racketeering enterprise.

I never claimed that Koch reversed his position on the death penalty, only that he selectively made it a dominant campaign theme. (His 1977 campaign literature for Manhattan ignored the subject, while flyers for the other boroughs trumpeted it.) As noted in *I, Koch*, he whispered to the late Queens Congressman Ben Rosenthal after a death penalty harangue at a senior center, "Listen, this is the only way I can get in."

Koch's calling Representative Ron Dellums a "Watusi" and a "Zulu Warrior" and saying that "Jews have to be crazy to vote for Jesse Jackson" are only the most blatant examples of his manipulation of New York racial tensions. A May 1989 *New York Observer* poll showed black New Yorkers giving Koch a miserable 18 percent favorable rating.

Koch is wrong about the Coliseum battle. Far from inviting the project's opponents "to the table," his intransigence cost the city several hundred million dollars, years of delay, and forced a broad coalition of civic groups to devote scarce funds for legal fees. The saddest part is that some had hoped Koch would learn from the fiasco; apparently not.

SAT Lessons

To the editors:

Although Theodore Steinberg (Correspondence, May 15) makes a cogent argument that the Scholastic Aptitude Test "teach[es] that the only thing that is important is a right answer," one must realize that the same can be said of any other part of a student's application. The preponderance of students work for high marks and join clubs keeping in mind only how impressive it will look on their transcripts. The arguments in favor of abolishing the SAT would be much stronger if it were the sole basis of a student's acceptance into college. But it is only one of many factors, and is not, despite inevitable flaws, any less accurate a measurement of scholastic aptitude than any other. And the SAT does teach skills invaluable to everyday living: how to circumvent and conquer obstacles that may or may not be fair, and to make them work for rather than against you.

EUNY HONG
Seoul, Korea

TRB *continued from page 4*

The Democrats have scarcely more.

Political will is not going to be summoned until whites and blacks can agree that they are citizens of the same country. Black nationalism is a dead end, as many observers, black and white, have noted. But so is what might be called white nationalism. And in this connection the tragic elements of American history hang heavy—not because they are acknowledged but because they are ignored. Many of our reigning national myths, important parts of America's civil religion, simply exclude black people. I have been trying to imagine what it's like for a black person to listen to a speech about how America is a "nation of immigrants" and the "land of opportunity." The truth is that this is *not* a nation of immigrants. It is a nation of immigrants and slaves. Our ancestors did *not* come here full of hope, seeking freedom and a better life. They came seeking freedom and they came in chains.

The speeches of politicians and other national leaders seldom take this into account. In their anxiety to draw happy, uncomplicated morals, they seldom tell the full American story. No wonder black people—whose roots in this country, on average, go back further than those of white people—are alienated.

Consider a couple of exceptions, drawn from the two greatest speeches ever delivered by Americans.

"Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether.' "

"I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood."

Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr. told the whole truth about America, and that is one reason they are deified in the American memory. Few of their contemporary successors emulate them. Yet what is needed, as the spiritual precondition to a material commitment, is a refurbished national mythology that takes account of the historical experience of all Americans. That is something politicians can begin to provide without spending a dime. The dilemma is not a black dilemma (or a white one) but an American dilemma. The answer is not "black history" but American history, not "black pride" (or white guilt) but American determination.

HENDRIK HERTZBERG

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Be Happy

IMAGINE MY SURPRISE WHEN I picked up *Burning Desires*, a new book by Steve Chapple and David Talbot about sex in America, and discovered that this "report from the field" includes a whole chapter about sex in Washington. Anyone who's spent any time in the sublimation capital of America knows what an unpromising subject this is. Predictably, the authors get stuck retelling the sad, familiar stories of Wilbur Mills, Robert Bauman, and Gary Hart—individuals whose disgrace for sexual indiscretions serves as a terrifying warning to most public servants. To pad out the chapter, the authors are reduced to writing about two pandas in the Washington Zoo who have trouble procreating and the "love-sick cicadas" who ended their 17-year slumber just as the authors arrived in Washington. They also let ex-*contra* brat Arturo Cruz Jr. rattle on about Fawn Hall, but the reader learns more about snobbery than about sex. ("How could I marry a woman whose name was Fawn?" asks Cruz. "Really, Fawn was her given name. Yet I loved her.") The spiciest information the authors provide is the testimony of "Mya," a 22-year-old prostitute who complains that congressmen "always try to please me. I say, 'No, no, I'm here to please you.' " It figures that even those politicians who go in for high-risk infidelity wouldn't know how to enjoy it.

I DOUBT I'M ALONE IN THINKing that it was terribly unfair for THE NEW REPUBLIC to single out Michael Oreskes of the *New York Times* for writing the most hand-wringing story about "the prospect of a new ethics hyperconsciousness in Washington" (Notebook, July 3). This reckless rush to judgment overlooked too many other worthy entries by the *Washington Post*. The *Post* beat the *Times* on the big stories about ethical questions surrounding House Speaker Jim Wright and Majority Whip Tony Coelho, so it's easy to underestimate its role in creating the sanctimonious backlash that followed. But the very fact that *Post* reporters like Charles Babcock and Ken Ringle were out front breaking smart stories about congressional sleaze meant the *Post*'s op-ed page and Outlook sections were obliged to balance things by publishing dumb stories advancing the revisionist line that it's all so much mindless cannibalism. Thus the ordinarily sensible *Roll Call* editor and TNR contributor Jim Glassman suggested that "nitpickery over 'ethics' " would drive good people away from government service. In fact, the departures of Wright and Coelho prove the opposite point: ethical fastidiousness drove out of Democratic leadership positions two political hacks who, among other things, helped create a $150 billion savings & loan crisis. Another thumbsucker by congressional scholar and quote-monster Norman Ornstein huffed that ethics mania may result in a Congress "populated by Ralph Naders, Mother Teresas, and Donald Trumps." For every rich jerk we get two highly able and passionate altruists? Sounds like a good deal to me. Finally, Sally Quinn submitted a surprisingly stuffy mood-in-the-capital essay positing that "the cycle of political scandal can become so disorienting that it stops being entertaining, or edifying." Theoretically true, I suppose. I'll let you know when it happens. But don't hold your breath.

THE FACT IS THAT THE NEW focus on congressional ethics is good for the country. There is now a decent chance that special interests won't be permitted to pay legalized bribes, i.e., "honoraria," to congressmen, because a chastened Congress finally will have outlawed them. Meanwhile, existing rules governing outside income and conflict of interest will be taken a bit more seriously. Maybe some members will even start holding themselves to a higher ethical standard than the rules allow. It's true that in all the excitement some mud got thrown at Representatives Tom Foley and William Gray, two apparently innocent victims. But the consensus was that the charges were unsupported and/or irrelevant, and they didn't stick. Now Foley, long one of the most admired members of Congress, is Speaker, and Gray, a black Philadelphia minister who just about everybody wants to play a greater role in national politics, is whip. When Wright and Coelho moved up to these posts in 1987, the predominant feeling in Washington was resignation. It's different with Foley and Gray. Most people seem to *like* seeing such capable legislators rewarded with top leadership positions. The new pair will likely do a much better job than their predecessors. Meanwhile, the new majority leader, Dick Gephardt—who in 1988 seemed to be more Congress's idea of a president than the country's—has promised his colleagues he won't abandon his duties to run again in 1992. So why all the long faces?

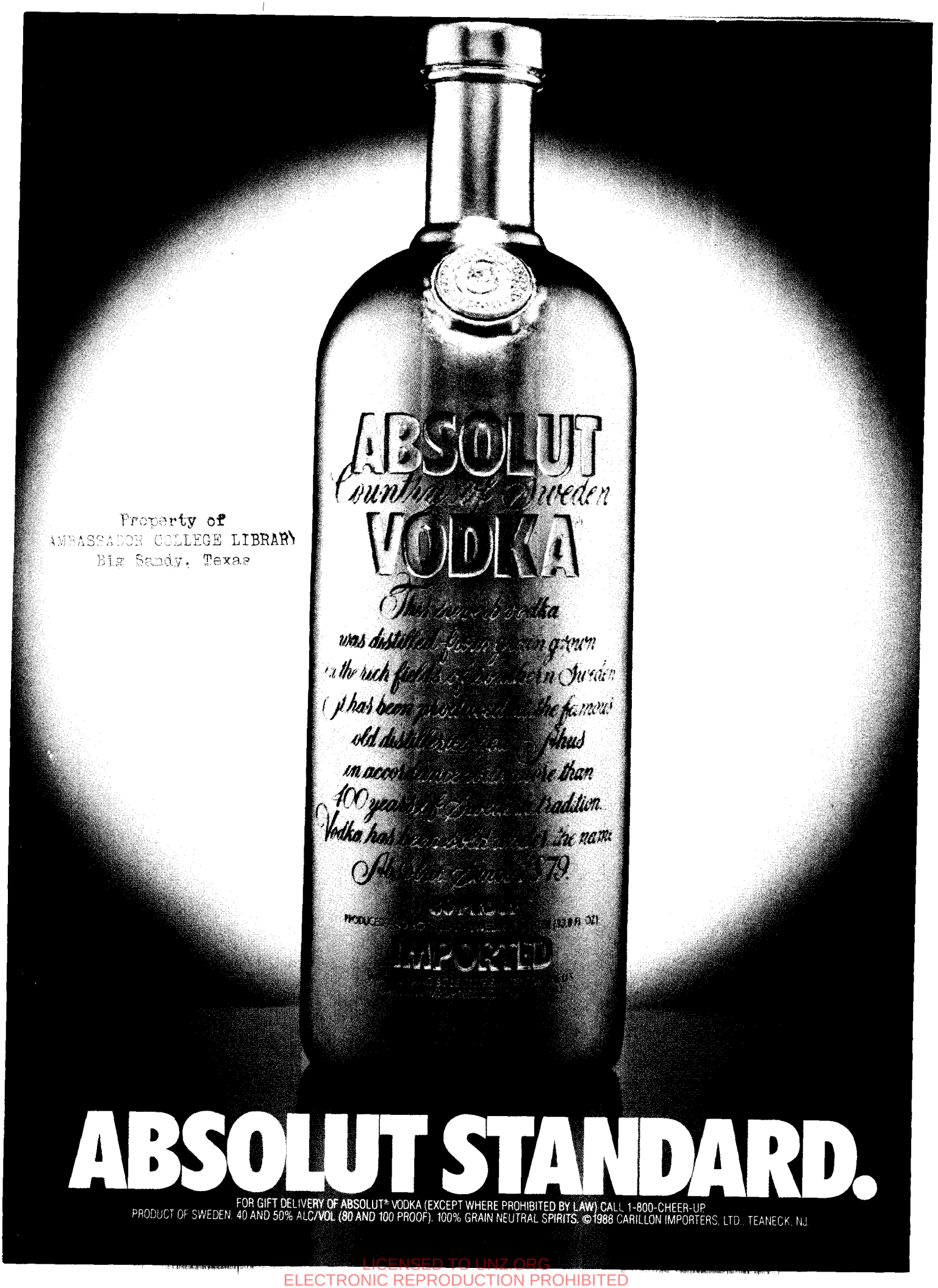
THE ETHICS "REIGN OF TERROR" (to cite yet another hysterical metaphor casually bandied about) vindicates the efforts of investigative reporters, whose craft has fallen out of fashion in recent years. Brooks Jackson of the *Wall Street Journal*, the leading practitioner of money-and-politics journalism and author of *Honest Graft*, a book largely about Tony Coelho, should be especially pleased. I know I'm feeling rather smug about my own modest contribution to the literature, a *Newsweek* story about how Representative Dan Rostenkowski showers surplus campaign funds and honoraria on grateful constituents in the form of charitable contributions. This reversal of the traditional cash flow has its laudable side, of course, but it also demonstrates yet another way in which a powerful member of Congress can cement his incumbency. In Rosty's Chicago district, the Polish Museum of America, to which he has contributed handsomely, even paid tribute with a bust of him. Contemplating it, I had a vision of the future. After honoraria are banned, members of Congress will (legally) bribe their districts en masse with special interest checks that they're no longer permitted to keep. I don't know what can be done about this, but a Congress of Robin Hoods will be an improvement on a Congress of Jim Wrights.

EVEN COELHO APPEARS TO COME out a winner in the new squeaky-clean Washington. His unexpectedly hasty departure in the wake of newspaper reports that he had gotten a special investment break on junk bonds has got to be an enormous relief to congressional Democrats who were fretting about whether to promote him to majority leader. Their gratitude will be money in the bank to Coelho should he choose to peddle influence in his next life. It helps that the press is at least half willing to believe that Coelho fell on his sword to Save The Institution. Coelho's speedy departure looked good in comparison to Wright's prolonged agony, which culminated in a Captain Queeg-like resignation speech before the House. On Coelho's last day (which was also his 47th birthday, as his office's last press release helpfully pointed out), reporters let Coelho rattle on about his work for the homeless, for fellow epileptics and others with disabilities, and on arms control. At a goodbye party that evening, attended by politicians and reporters, Bill Gray got a bit carried away and removed Coelho's tasseled loafers to hold them up before the crowd. "Big shoes," he said. "Big shoes to fill." Now get out of here, you knucklehead, and I mean it.

TIMOTHY NOAH

TIMOTHY NOAH is a Washington writer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


ABSOLUT
VODKA
IMPORTED
ABSOLUT STANDARD.
FOR GIFT DELIVERY OF ABSOLUT® VODKA (EXCEPT WHERE PROHIBITED BY LAW) CALL 1-800-CHEER-UP.
PRODUCT OF SWEDEN. 40 AND 50% ALC/VOL (80 AND 100 PROOF). 100% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS. © 1988 CARILLON IMPORTERS, LTD., TEANECK, N.J.

Property of
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Big Sandy, Texas

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED